Daily Report

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-88-053
Friday
18 March 1988

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Cuba

Castro on Possibility of National Sports Games

FL171604 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1300 GMT 17 Mar 88

[From the sports segment of the program "Morning Magazine"]

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the PCC Central Committee and president of the Councils of State and Ministers, last night presented Olympic awards to all those Cuban athletes who have won gold, silver, and bronze medals at the Summer Olympics. The formal ceremony was held at the FAR's Universal Hall and was also attended by other party and sports officials. Here is an excerpt of the ceremony:

[Begin recording in progress; video shows Castro on the stage, presenting pins to each individual as names are called out by an off-camera announcer] ...in Mexico, 1968.

Boxing: (Enrique Regueinfero), silver medalist in Mexico, 1968.

Boxing: Teofilo Stevenson, three-time Olympic champion—gold medalist in Munich, 1972; Montreal, 1976; and Moscow, 1980. [video shows Castro and Stevenson shaking hands, talking briefly] [end recording]

Moments later, our commander addressed the honorees and guests at the request of Comrade Alberto Juantorena. Here is an excerpt of the speech:

[Begin Castro recording] I want to tell you comrades that this has been a simple but moving ceremony. In only a few minutes, we have relived your glory and the country's glory. Will our sports decline? No, our sports will not decline. Our sports will be invigorated. We are men of honor, men who can go anywhere with our heads held high, men who can let the sun, the light of dignity, shine on our faces. Though we don't go this time, we are already preparing for the Pan-American Games.

We are building installations. However, we said building would go on with or without the Pan-American Games. And it is. No one can stop construction. Now, the Pan-American Games are a good thing, but they are more of a pretext to build a good number of sports facilities. And we are going to build them all. You can see yourselves that they are being built here in the capital. Suppose there are no Pan-American Games. Who are these facilities for? For the people, our youth, our athletes. Are we going to stop building sports facilities after the Pan-American Games? No. Once we warm up, no one can stop us from building sports facilities.

There will come a time, a time will come again, when we can attend these events with honor. We hope that we are not unfairly robbed of the Pan-American Games. But not even that would slow down our sports movement. I can understand that there might be athletes eligible to participate in these Olympics but who won't be able to take part in the next ones, or who may no longer be able to take part in the Pan-American Games. However, in a country such as ours, with such a developed sense of unity and solidarity, it should not be a trauma for anyone. The medals of the others are our medals. The honor of the others is our honor. The athletes will always have the respect and affection of our people. With or without medals, with or without Olympics—in international and national competition, they will always enjoy all regard and respect.

We will consider the merit in this. We should make a list of those who, capable of winning an Olympic medal, did not because they could not attend the games. We could hold competitions here and see how things go. Then we will award the medal of honor to those athletes who, to observe a principle, to practice solidarity, were unable to get a gold, silver, or bronze medal. We are going to give those athletes the gold medal of honor. They will not be forgotten. [applause] [end recording]

Minfar Issues Communique on Fighting in Angola

FL181142 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1105 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] A substantial change has occurred in Angola's situation, according to a communique from the Minfar [Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces] today. It adds that using infantry of the counterrevolutionary UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola], Namibian mercenaries, and its own regular Army troops, South Africa has tried in vain to occupy Cuito Cuanavale in southwest Angola for the last 3 and 1/2 months.

The communique further adds that the aggression is taking place 200 km from the extreme left of the lines defended by the Cuban troops in southern Angola. The South Africans intervened, making extensive use of infantry, tanks, long-range heavy artillery, and aircraft, with the intention of annihilating Angolan troops engaged in an offensive against the UNITA, the communique states.

There were no Cuban military personnel in Cuito Cuanavale.

At the Angolan Government's request, Cuban advisers were sent to assist the FAPLA [People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola] troops, along with some personnel specialized in artillery and tanks, the Minfar communique says. The Cuban Air Force in Angola was reinforced with a group of our most expert pilots.

In view of South Africa's persistent attempts to occupy Cuito Cuanavale, Cuban mechanized infantry units, tanks, and artillery were sent in January to reinforce the heroic Angolan troops, who were defending the position

with a limited number of Cuban advisers. Since December all enemy attacks against the unmovable Cuban-Angolan resistance have failed. The communique notes that South Africa has fired more than 20,000 155-mm projectiles.

All South African attempts to occupy Cuito Cuanavale have been met with a hail of artillery fire and air strikes. The Minfar communique states that the Cuban-Angolan Air Force has played a brilliant role in the course of the fighting. The pilots have accomplished real feats, unceasingly and implacably attacking the enemy forces. The Angolan soldiers have acted with admirable courage; since they make up the bulk of the defending forces and have had the largest part in the fighting, their units have suffered hundreds of casualties. The Cuban forces have suffered 39 casualties, counting dead and wounded.

The communique says: The Cuban and Angolan troops in Cuito Cuanavale are already a symbol to the peoples of Africa and the world.

Envoy Meets With 'Internationalists' in Angola

FL172330 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2049 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Martin Mora, Cuban ambassador to Angola, has met with (Jorge Barro Sinpawati), provincial commissioner [comisario] of Cabinda, and with Cuban internationalists who are working in that region of Angola.

The dedicated work of the Cuban contingents of forestry, construction, and health workers, teachers, and others who provide their services in Cabinda was emphasized during the meeting. [passage omitted]

Before returning to Luanda, Ambassador Mora met with Cuban civil collaborators and briefed them on the situation in our country and abroad, according to a PRENSA LATINA press release datelined Cabinda.

Party Official Named Envoy to Mozambique

FL151358 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] The Council of State has named Comrade Jose Eloy Valdes Espinosa as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Mozambique. At the time of his appointment, Valdes Espinosa was deputy chief of the General Department of Foreign Relations of the PCC Central Committee.

Lopez Moreno Continues Eastern Europe Visit

Received by CSSR Deputy Premier

FL160110 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Miroslav Toman, deputy premier of the CSSR and minister of agriculture, received in Prague today Jose Lopez Moreno, vice president of Cuba's Council of Ministers and minister president of the Central Planning Board.

Arrives in Yugoslavia

FL161503 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Cuban Vice President Jose Lopez Moreno has arrived in Yugoslavia for an official working visit. The Juceplan [Central Planning Board] chief will be received by Lazar Mojsov, Yugoslav president, and Branko Mikulic, president of the Yugoslav Federal Executive Council. Lopez Moreno arrived in Belgrade from Prague, after a 2-day visit to the CSSR.

Meets With Yugoslav Leaders

FL171435 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] President Lazar Mojsov has received Cuban Vice President Jose Lopez Moreno, who is on an official visit to Yugoslavia. Lopez Moreno was also received by Branko Mikulic, head of the government.

Lopez Moreno delivered a message from President Fidel Castro to the Yugoslav leaders. The message deals with a forthcoming ministerial conference to be held in Belgrade by a group of developing countries.

The officials discussed the need to foster more economic cooperation between the two countries through the establishment of joint venture enterprises. They also expressed mutual interest in having Yugoslav firms participate in capital development projects in Cuba.

New York Archbishop To Visit 'Shortly'

FL161430 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] New York Archbishop John Cardinal O'Connor will visit Cuba shortly. The information was provided by (George Willins), the archbishop's assistant director for communications. The spokesman said that the prelate accepted an invitation from the Cuban Episcopal Conference to come to Havana, but the date of the visit has not yet been set.

Sports Institute VP Visits Canada, Bolivia

FL150405 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Alberto Juantorena, vice president of the INDER [National Sports, Physical Education, and Recreation Institute], is visiting Canada as part of a tour he is taking to several nations of the continent. The Cuban sports leader was welcomed by members of the Quebec-Cuba Friendship Association, who expressed their sympathies toward the Cuban revolution. Yesterday the former athlete visited the Montreal Olympic Stadium, where he won medals for the 400- and 800-meter dash in 1976. PRENSA LATINA added that Juantorena said Montreal has had a special meaning in his life.

In his tour, the two-time Olympic champion signed a sports cooperation agreement in Bolivia and has extended invitations for the 1991 Pan American Games, to be held in our country.

Former Inmates on Kilo Siete Prison Conditions

FL171755 [Editorial Report] During its regular "Morning Magazine" program, Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish at 1339 GMT on 17 March carries a 5-minute video report prepared by journalist Antonio Resillez on conditions at the Kilo Siete prison for men in Camaguey Province. Resillez says he spent several days there and proceeds to interview two men said to be inmates who have just completed 10-year sentences at Kilo Siete. The video shows the two men standing outdoors with Resillez holding a microphone. One of the men says that "deviates" who come to the prison can leave with a "new way of life, a new education, thanks to the way they are treated, the political work that enables the individual to resume his place in society." He says that this treatment is afforded to everyone. Resillez brings up the complaints of relatives about a lack of food and about mistreatment at the prison, and both men say that these are lies and distortions. While the men speak, clips are shown of the Interior Ministry's mosaics factory and what appears to be a kitchen.

Were you ever mistreated yourselves? Resillez asks. "Never," the men answer in unison. One of them adds that since he's been out, everyone has treated him "just like any other citizen." "Before I was sent to jail," he says, "I was a revolutionary, and I have to keep being a revolutionary, whether in jail or not, everywhere." Asked if they had ever been worried about their reception or welcome, they say they certainly were. The second man remarks that he even brought it up with his "educator" and the unit director, who assured them that as long as they met their obligation toward society and kept behaving the way they were, they would be treated the same as any other person outside. The scene changes to show a man in uniform speaking to another in civilian clothing recommending that he behave well, start working, become useful to society, and not make his mother suffer anymore. The man expresses gratitude, and walks outside with a piece of paper in hand into the arms of a waiting woman.

Paper Gives Subsidy Figures for Consumer Goods

FL151829 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1337 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Report read by "Morning Magazine" program host Tony Gonzalez]

[Text] The following information is an exclusive reported by journalist Jose Llanes in today's issue of TRABAJADORES. It says that in 1987, 352.2 million pesos from the central budget went to subsidize basic consumer goods. The State Committee for Finances gave this information to Comrade Llanes. As is known, Llanes adds, this mechanism has for a long time made it possible for our people to purchase these products at low and stable prices. These items have a production cost above the selling price. The mechanism also enables the enterprises not to be financially affected.

The figure for beef subsidies last year was 74.2 million pesos, while the figure for frozen poultry subsidies was 25.5 million pesos. Other basic goods that had high subsidies were as follows: fresh and frozen fish, 71.9 million pesos; milk, 70.3 million pesos; and coffee, 26.6 million pesos, up 9.2 million pesos from the 1986 figure as a result of a price increase by the enterprise.

Llanes concludes by saying that the subsidy mechanism is concrete evidence of the constant attention the revolution gives to problems that might affect the people in any way.

Plans To Deal With Isle of Youth Drought Noted

FL151613 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] The Isle of Youth is experiencing an intense drought. Only 53 mm of rain have fallen during the past 4 months, or 38 percent of the average. This was the premise of the analyses by members of various Isle of Youth entities to try to find solutions to reduce the damage caused by the drought. The analyses resulted in an emerging program for the better use of water and the repair of the necessary equipment to supply cultivated land with the precious liquid. Some 10 agreements derived from the analyses. Prominent among them are plans to eliminate wasting of water and to step up vigilance to prevent fires, which have increased in number as a result of the intense drought.

$5 Million Said Invested in AIDS Detection

FL151345 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Cuba has invested some $5 million in the acquisition of technology to detect AIDS. Up to 9 March, 195 people were found to be carrying the AIDS virus. Of these, 6 died and 21 developed the disease. Contrary to other nations, most of those who contract AIDS here are heterosexuals and the means of transmission is sexual.

Haiti

Government States Position on Drug Trafficking

FL172232 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The Government of the Republic of Haiti has examined the drug problem and the worldwide drug trafficking issue.

All kinds of drugs traverse the countries of the Caribbean Basin in order to reach the American market, which is the final destination of most of the traffic. This American market is the reason the drug traffic exists.

The government is really determined to make clear to national and international public opinion the Haitian Government's position on this matter.

First, the Haitian Government again declares that it is determined to fight drugs—that scourge, that plague, that has fallen upon our society. We know what kind of damage it can do if we allow it to propagate; therefore, we view it as constituting a serious threat to our youth and our entire population. For this reason, the government again reiterates its willingness to strengthen its participation in the struggle against drug addiction throughout Haitian territory and to collaborate with all foreign (?and/or) international institutions that are struggling against drug trafficking, especially since there is a tendency to use Haiti as a way station along the drug route.

Second, it is the Haitian Government's intention to make the Haitian people's autonomy be respected and to avoid any collusion so that no one will point a finger at Haiti and so that no one will blame Haiti without reason for being an important way station along the drug route, in the same way they tried for a long time to make people believe we were the cause of AIDS.

Thus, the Haitian Government is determined to strengthen its participation, whether in our own meetings or on an international level, in the struggle against free trade in drugs.

Third, in all cases of accusations against individuals or institutions, the Haitian Government would greatly appreciate, within the framework of the government's collaboration with foreign or international institutions in this domain, being given the full dossier—the documents and all the evidence. The government could then send this dossier to the Haitian institutions empowered by the Haitian Constitution and by Haitian law to examine it. In keeping with the decisions reached by these institutions, and in keeping with our international commitments, our traditions, our principles, and Haiti's interests, the Haitian Government will then reach a decision, in keeping with the law.

This press release was issued in Port-au-Prince on 14 March 1988, after a meeting of the prime minister's staff to establish their position on the drug issue.

Canadian Parliamentary Delegation Visits

FL152255 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil in Creole 1200 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpts] A Canadian parliamentary delegation has been in Haiti since Saturday to evaluate Canadian aid to Haiti. [passage omitted]

Yesterday, the delegation met with President Manigat, Foreign Minister Gerard Latortue, the Episcopal Conference of Haiti, and human rights organizations, and was also to have met with the press.

According to Canadian press reports, the subject of human rights was discussed extensively. [passage omitted]

Yesterday, the delegation visited a hospital partially financed by (?Canada) and today it is supposed to meet with members of the opposition, with representatives of management and labor unions, with members of the Canadian community in Haiti, and with foreign diplomats serving in Haiti.

According to Mr Hudon, who is heading the delegation, Canada is not planning to stop aiding Haiti, but the Canadian legislative chamber will be watching carefully to see how things unfold. [passage omitted]

Meets With Opposition Leaders

FL162236 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpts] The Canadian parliamentary mission headed by Jean Guy Hudon, a deputy and the parliamentary secretary of Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, which is in Haiti to gather information on how Canadian aid is being used, met with five Haitian leaders in Port-au-Prince yesterday morning. Four of the five leaders are members of the opposition.

The leaders were: Sylvio Claude, of the Haitian Christian Democratic Party; Gerard Gourgue, of the National Concerted Action Front—both members of the Committee for Democratic Agreement, the country's main opposition force, says AFP—Gregoire Eugene, of the Haitian Social Christian Party; Hubert de Ronceray, of the Mobilization for National Development; and Francois Latortue, of the Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Haiti, who said he is observing a truce in favor of the Manigat government.

Gerard Gourgue told AFP after talking with the delegation: We indicated that in order for Canadian aid to Haiti to have good results, it should be given within a democratic political context, with good national credibility, which is not the case today.

For his part, Mr De Ronceray made a distinction between aid subject to a number of political conditions, such as respect for democratic principles and human rights, and humanitarian aid through nongovernmental channels.

Mr Latortue said he thought Canada should help Haiti, that it should give President Manigat a chance.

None of the Haitian participants in the meeting asked that Canadian aid to Haiti be stopped. [passage omitted]

In addition to Mr Hudon, four members of Ottawa's Parliament compose the delegation. They are: (Leo Duguay) and (Andre Harvey), Conservatives; (Howard D. McCurdy), said to be a neo-Democrat; and (Andre Ouellet), a Liberal. The delegation is scheduled to leave Haiti Friday, after holding a news conference.

Manigat Visits Factory, Talks to Workers
FL162210 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] After visiting the Darbonne sugar mill, President Manigat visited the factory where tomatoes produced by Haitian peasants are made into tomato paste and tomato sauce. This is a Haitian product, made and consumed in Haiti.

According to a press release from the Ministry of Information and Mass Education emphasizing the importance of this visit, which shows the executive's desire to encourage the (?development) of such industries in Haiti, not only does this provide Haitian products for the Haitian market but it also means jobs for citizens because there is much unemployment in Haiti.

During his visit, President Manigat was briefed by factory technicians. He spoke to the workers before leaving. Manigat told them that the factory's success is due also to the workers' performance. Let's listen to an excerpt of the president's statements.

[Begin Manigat recording] [Passage omitted] The country must change. It is time for the country to change but we must all change it together. Each person, in whatever position God has put him, can do something to help the country progress. Thus, I am very happy to see you. I wanted to tell you that the president had not just come to see the factory, the motors and machines. He came to see you, too, because, in the final analysis, it is you who constitute Haiti. Haiti should be built with you in mind so that things will be a little better for everyone. Despite the little and the very big problems we have in Haiti, let's gather our courage and come together so that we can, together, prepare a better tomorrow for our children. That is what your president is for. [applause] [end recording]

Narcisse Writes PM Asking To Recover Citizenship
FL152241 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Daniel Narcisse has written Prime Minister Martial Celestin, who is also minister of justice, regarding the recovery of his Haitian citizenship. He wrote from Canada, where he is living presently, after having been forced to leave Haiti in August of 1987. [passage omitted]

Narcisse informs the prime minister that he has complied with all legal requirements to recover citizenship and that, consequently, there is nothing justifying the CNG's [National Government Council] 31 July decision to expel him from Haiti. [passage omitted]

Narcisse says he wants to return to Haiti and asked the prime minister to take the necessary measures to annul the interdiction for him to enter Haiti so that he can come back to live in his country permanently.

Narcisse again asks to recover his Haitian citizenship taken from him by Francois Duvalier.

In his letter to the prime minister, Narcisse also points out that certain citizens who were naturalized and, thus, held other nationalities were able to recover their Haitian citizenship in only 2 days. [passage omitted]

Les Cayes Groups Protest Prefect's Communique
FL152308 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Information Minister Savain's 7 March 1988 communique issuing a big warning to the press has begun being followed in the provinces.

In Les Cayes, the person in charge of an office the Constitution of 1987 doesn't even recognize has already drawn inspiration from the 7 March 1988 communique.

Everyone in Les Cayes is very surprised. Les Cayes prefect (Maxim Calixte), also said to be a doctor, has just struck a serious blow to freedom of assembly in southern Haiti. No new association may be formed unless prefect (Calixte) is informed prior to its formation. Thus, the holder of an unconstitutional office has decided to frustrate a right the Constitution itself recognizes.

But reaction to this communique, which appeared at the end of last week, has begun coming in.

The National Committee of the Congress of Democratic Movements [Conacom/Konakom] says it is taking a stand against prefect (Calixte's) communique to the effect that groups may not function without his authorization for two reasons: First, the Constitution of 1987 says clearly, in Article 31, that freedom of association and assembly for political, economic and social, or any other peaceable purposes is guaranteed by law, as long as no weapons are involved.

Second, since the historic day of 29 March 1987 [the date the Constitution was ratified], Haiti does not recognize any official called a prefect. Article 85 of the Constitution says that the executive will appoint a representative to each geographical department of Haiti. This representative will bear the title of delegate. [passage omitted]

People should not forget that according to Article 86 of the Constitution, the role of the delegate is simply to organize reaction to all public services, and to supervise them. Delegates have no police function. [passage omitted]

Thus, Konakom considers the prefect's communique null and void.

Fedka, the Federation of Neighborhood Committees and Associations, protests against what they term the vestige of a prefect of Les Cayes because the Constitution does not recognize a prefect—(Maxim Calixte)—and because of the macoute communique he issued in which he asked all mass organizations formed after 7 February to appear before the macoute prefecture and in which he said all meetings had to be authorized by the prefect's office in Les Cayes.

Fedka wishes to inform, to remind, (Maxim Calixte) that the people are struggling precisely for freedom of speech and for the right to form organizations. Macoute laws will never serve to provide democracy to mass organizations. The mass organizations will continue to ignore all laws and decrees of the puppet government that go against the interests of the mass organizations in Haiti. We will not give up the freedoms of speech and assembly that we won in battle.

Thus Fedka, too, says it does not recognize the communique put out by prefect (Maxim Calixte) in Les Cayes at the end of last week.

MDN Not To Oppose Return of Petit Goave Priest

FL152320 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Can the MDN [Mobilization for National Development] prevent the parish priest of Petit Goave from returning to his parish? This is the big question being asked in Petit Goave and the surrounding area.

In any case, at the MDN's meeting of 13 March 1988, the MDN said that it will not oppose Father (Simon Bourcicault's) returning to Petit Goave.

This affair goes back to 29 November 1987, the day the elections were really supposed to take place.

On that day, Television Nationale had filmed many MDN partisans saying that the parish priest had committed fraud against the MDN. On that occasion, a little boy said over television that the priest had stowed MDN ballots away in the bathroom. The bathroom was, indeed, 2 centimeters away from the ballots and, apparently, it never occured to the priest to throw the ballots, which were right next to it, into the (?latrine).

Well, after these accusations, there was much testimony from Petit Goave to the effect that the whole thing was a well-orchestrated plot to ruin the elections. The curate of Petit Goave discussed this at length.

Also, many people had found it amazing that on that day, Television Nationale had been able to travel for more than an hour and reach Petit Goave in time to film this; whereas it had not had time to arrive at the Ruelle Vaillant [site of the worst of the 29 November killings], only 10 minutes away from it.

We must remind listeners that a lot of initiatives have been taken these last few days. Many delegations have been formed, to come ask for the priests to return to the parish of Petit Goave, where they are needed.

Judge in Jeremie Case Reportedly Fired

FL172300 Port-au-Prince Radio Antilles-Internationales in French 1800 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] We learned this morning from a reliable source that Examining Magistrate (Antoine Phanor) has been fired. He heard, last Friday, the Samuel Jeremie case.

According to this same source, the General Tax Administration had complained about Mr (Phanor) to the Ministry of Justice, in connection with the Samuel Jeremie affair.

Also, we went to the courts of law this morning to see Examining Magistrate (Gerard Etienne), who has handed down rulings favorable to Frantz Merceron, Mireille Merceron, and Jean Sambour, and we learned that he has not set foot in his office since Monday, nor has his court clerk, Mr (Phedre Revermond). This is a matter we will continue to follow.

Conflict Between Workers Organizations Viewed

FL142250 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Two workers central organizations here in Haiti—the Autonomous Confederation of Haitian Workers affiliated with the Latin-American Confederation of Workers [CATH/CLAT] and the Autonomous Confederation of Haitian Workers—are at odds. One of these workers central organizations has its headquarters on Rue des Miracles and the other on Rue des Casernes.

According to a press release from CATH/CLAT, they have noted, for the past few months now, that a campaign of sabotage and disparagement has been waged against the CATH/CLAT by the workers central organization from the Rue des Casernes.

Recently, an official of the CATH—whose headquarters is located on Rue des Casernes—was caught red-handed at the Mevs industrial park denigrating the CATH/CLAT before leaders of the union (Haiti-America Fashion).

According to CATH/CLAT, these maneuvers are part of the political plan for disorder that CATH has initiated at the Rue des Casernes with a view to having the country controlled by a single political party and all workers become members of a single central organization of workers, the CATH.

We went and met with the leaders of both these central organizations of workers. They can throw some light on this conflict for you. Let's listen.

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] In any case, we are already in the community, like we said. Our first union is at (?Liautaud's). We also have others, in companies such as El Maco, for instance. All these things have been done. And just the day before yesterday, we were in the Mevs industrial park, where a group of CATH members came to approach workers while they were eating to tell them that CATH/CLAT is a union that works in favor of management. They said: CATH-/CLAT does not care about the worker's problems; the workers problems must be attacked with violence; only violence can provide a solution. CATH/CLAT is not working in the interests of the workers. We, the CATH, are working in the interest of the workers.

As they started to talk there, they saw fellow union member Germain and ran away. It was not until workers affiliated with us came and told us this that we discovered the problem, and we said: We won't tolerate this kind of thing any longer. This is why we are informing public opinion. [passage omitted with indistinct portions]

Well, we don't have any objections. The only thing is that in Haiti, as you know, there are three central organizations of workers. Of course, each has its own ideology and its own following. But central organizations of workers exist and should exist. Other countries have two, three, or even four central organizations of workers. The only thing is that when the workers have national demands, for example, [words indistinct] Haiti at present there is a problem with the Labor Code; or when you are going to prepare the 1 May celebration, and things like that, you get together.... We wrote the new minister to ask for a meeting with him to discuss a new formula to prepare the new Labor Code we need now. [end recording]

Still according to CATH/CLAT President Georges Fortune, the CATH is the offspring of the CATH/CLAT, and the conflict has existed since the CATH broke away from the CATH/CLAT. The CATH/CLAT president told us that 90 percent of Haitian workers are as yet unorganized, that they already have 50 unions affiliated with them throughout the country, and that they have 130,000 members.

According to Fortune, they work each Friday to train workers—that is, to teach them their rights and their duties, the kind of relations that should exist between management and labor, and so forth. According to the CATH/CLAT president, the conflict cannot be allowed to remain as is. That is why they have just drawn up a code of conduct so that the central organization of workers will know how to respect one another, especially the CATH people. Let's listen to [words indistinct] the conflict.

[Begin Fortune recording] In any case, as you know, CATH came from CATH/CLAT. In fact, when we first came on the scene, [words indistinct] in general it was we who recruited Yves Richard and all of tl. se men—Auguste Mesyeux, Armand Pierre—who trained them. And when they got here after 7 February, they said they would not work with us any longer. And they went off and formed their own central organization of workers. And we told them: OK, no problem. Go ahead and form your own central organization of workers. The only thing is that since our principles are based on the social doctrines of the church, we said there was no problem with everyone going off and forming their own workers central organization, but we ourselves followed our own ideas and we have been organizing ourselves since then. So that was how it started. [end recording]

We were not satisfied to listen only to the statements of the CATH/CLAT authorities. We also interviewed Jean Auguste Mesyeux, the executive secretary of the CATH. He said he heard over the radio that CATH/CLAT had accused CATH of paying money to have unions disaffiliate from CATH/CLAT. For Mesyeux, it looks like the CATH/CLAT was labeling CATH communist, saying that the communists gave CATH money to pay the workers. He said the workers were flocking to CATH of their own accord, and this is because the CATH/CLAT has no strength, says Mesyeux. They lack strength, and the workers have noticed that CATH/CLAT does not defend their interests.

Mesyeux said that this is not the time for conflict but rather a time to reflect upon the country's situation, upon the workers problems, so that they can attain greater well-being, and a time to reflect on the Haitian canecutters suffering in the Dominican Republic.

According to Mesyeux, CATH is not seeking to engage in polemics or to sow division. They need dialogue and understanding, in order to save the country. Mesyeux concluded by asking CATH/CLAT President Georges Fortune to make reparation for his mistake, if he really feels he made a mistake. Let's listen.

[Begin Mesyeux recording] Up to the present, Fortune cannot say that we are waging a compaign against him. That is what he himself is doing. Everywhere he goes, he denigrates us. He says we are communists. I think that when he says CATH is distributing a lot of money and that we must be communists, he probably thinks we are getting money from Cuba or the Soviet Union. That is probably (?what he thinks), because he says we have lots of money and that he doesn't know where the money came from. Now, why would we go around denigrating

Fortune. I don't see why. It is he himself who, everywhere he passes in the provinces, says that CATH is communist; that it is he who is Christian; that it is he who can do something serious, because communists and Christians don't go together.

Now, I would like for Fortune to tell me what book he read this in. Where did he read that CATH was communist?

Now, despite his campaign of disparagement, the workers are continuing to seek central organizations of workers or associations that defend their interests. [passage omitted] [end recording]

In connection with this conflict between the CATH and the CATH/CLAT, we remind listeners that in a press release issued over the weekend, the Haitian Workers Committee, COH [Comite Ourvriers Haitiens], expressed its support for the CATH in the conflict with the CATH/CLAT. [passage omitted]

Telecommunications Technicians Continue Strike

FL162345 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Teleco [Telecommunications d'Haiti—the national telephone company] technicians at the (San-Fil) Street office will continue their strike until the Teleco authorities listen to their demands. This is what more than 300 striking employees said.

Yesterday was the 2d day of the strike. The employees have been striking for better working conditions at that office since the day before yesterday. They want the contract signed with the administration fully honored. [passage omitted]

The workers, who make $150 per month, have realized that this salary is not enough due to the constant rise in the cost of living. [passage omitted] They say they need $350 in order to survive. [passage omitted]

Minoterie Workers Strike, Reach Agreement

FL172250 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Yesterday morning, the employees of the Minoterie d'Haiti [the national flour mill] went on a 24-hour strike in demand of a wage increase. Mr (Renel Francois), president of the Minoterie's unionized workers, said the strike was a warning strike and that if the Minoterie authorities did not satisfy their demands, they would go on strike again next Monday. [passage omitted]

We have received a note from the Minoterie and the Minoterie workers union informing us that the employees have held talks with Minoterie officials and an agreement on the workers demands has been reached between the workers and the administration. Thus all activity is resuming this morning, said the communique.

PUCH's Theodore Says Celestin 'Incompetent'

FL172205 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The leaders of the Unified Party of Haitian Communists [PUCH] held a news conference this morning.

Diverse topics, such as Haiti's position vis-a-vis drug trafficking and the lifting of the sequestration on the property of former ministers of the Duvaliers, were discussed during this press conference.

[In Creole] The PUCH held a news conference at its headquarters on Rue Champ de Mars today during which they spoke of the 2 years they have been in Haiti. They said that today is the second anniversary of the PUCH's arrival in Haiti, of the arrival of Rene Theodore and Max Bourjolly in Haiti. They have been in Haiti 2 years, from 17 March 1986 to 17 March 1988.

In the news conference they gave a general roundup [preceding word in English] of the current political situation in Haiti. They talked about the decision to lift the sequestration on the property of the (?Duvaliers') former collaborators.

Questioned about the possible sanctions by the U.S. Senate against Haiti— that is, a trade embargo—the withdrawing of all advantages to Haiti under the CBI, the Caribbean Basin Initiative, and other economic sanctions in general that might be taken against Haiti if the Senate passes this bill, Rene Theodore said this is one more form of imperialism and that this will teach us to, henceforth, count only on our own means, should these measures be applied.

Theodore said we should do things for ourselves. He noted that this was definitely a form of imperialism and that, henceforth, we are going to count on ourselves, on our own means.

Theodore also talked about the strikes going on this week in a number of public companies such as Teleco [Telecommunications d'Haiti, the national telephone company]. He said Martial Celestin's government has shown itself to be ineffective in a series of essential matters going on in the country. Theodore even called the prime minister irresponsible. Theodore said the prime minister is not equal to the task.

Rene Theodore was also asked about a number of organizations that have become practically nonexistant since 17 January. Theodore responded that he didn't know about the others, but that the PUCH is an organization, a party that is not merely interested in winning elections. It is, rather, a party that will always be working in place until it achieves what it needs to achieve. Theodore said that Haiti would have to have a people's government in order for (?the PUCH) to be able to apply all the wonderful programs they have for Haiti.

Mr Theodore also talked about the Panamanian affair, in particular about General Noriega's indictment in connection with drugs and also about the indictment of high-ranking Haitian military (?personnel) in connection with drugs. He said these measures are all a type of pressure from the Americans, that this is a kind of imperialist measure they are subjecting on small countries.

We are going to listen to an excerpt from the news conference in which Theodore talks about the current situation, especially, about the strikes going on in Haiti in a series of public companies, such as Teleco. Here is Mr Rene Theodore.

[Begin Theodore recording, in progress] ...many strikes, many strikes in companies, public companies—Minoterie, Teleco—and also in private companies.

There are strikes for wage increases, for adjustments, for better sanitary conditions, etc. All these strikes are normal. We support all these strikes because the government has shown its ineffectiveness in dealing with a series of essential matters, such as how much people are paying to live, to exist in Haiti at present.

There are no price controls. No measures have been taken to lower prices. There is speculation on an entire series of foodstuffs and other products that people need in order to live. Nothing has been done to control high rents in Haiti. Nothing has been done.

Thus, the workers struggle to lower these prices or to raise salaries, if prices cannot be lowered. It is a legitimate struggle. Such a struggle is normal, and we support them 100 percent.

At the same time, there is a security problem in Haiti. People are found dead in the streets in Port-au-Prince from time to time. They are killed during the night, riddled with bullets, without anyone knowing why, without anyone knowing what anyone had against them. These things are very very serious. Things like this cause people to live in fear in Haiti.

We believe the government has a responsibility over this. When a prime minister stands before you and says that what is going on is like a cowboy movie, like what you see in the movies, and that things like this do happen—when he is also the minister of justice—he is not making any effort to mobilize, to place blame, to find the guilty parties responsible, to establish the climate of security for the Haitian people to live in that he has an obligation to establish in Haiti. This shows us that he is incompetent and, perhaps, at the same time that he does not understand his role as prime minister in this matter, the responsibility he has as prime minister.

We are sorry that Haiti, which wants to embark along the path of democracy, is not capable of making the courts begin to work in Haiti, making justice begin to triumph.

We realize, too, that copying this example, a series of little chiefs are popping up in different places in Haiti such as in Les Cayes, where the prefect has said people cannot form associations without authorization from him; or in Thiotte, where a communal magistrate has said people may not report news over the radio regarding his area without his authorization.

There are a series of big difficulties arising that are due to the fact that the people in positions of authority in different areas did not attain those positions through elections. They are also due to the fact that to this day, the communes are not operating according to constitutional norms since no one knows what has become of the CEP [Provisional Electoral Council]. Its mandate ended on 7 February, but we still don't know the results of the Casec [Administrative Councils for the Communal Sections] elections. We still do not know to this day what communal assembly is directing the activities of the communes in any part of the country.

All these things show that everything [words indistinct] in Haiti, to this day. [end recording]

Jamaica

RJR at 'Loggerheads' With Prime Minister

FL180040 Bridgetown CANA in English 1748 GMT 17 Mar 88

[By Paget de Freitas]

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, March 17, CANA—Radio Jamaica (RJR) is at loggerheads with Prime Minister Edward Seaga's administration over the terms of a new operating licence. RJR wants improved broadcast rights but Seaga, who is minister of information, says the government has gone as far as it intends in the liberalization of the RJR licence to replace the current one which expires early in 1989. The impasse is holding up the governments plan to divest its 25 per cent share of the company.

The centre of the dispute is RJR's objection to a clause giving to the broadcast commission the right to demand information on material the station intends to broadcast and to halt the broadcast in the national interest. We say this as an erosion of the freedom of expression to the point where it is unconstitutional, an RJR spokesman said. But the government has argued that RJR, formerly owned by the British rediffusion group, has been living with the clause in a more onerous form for 14 years.

Under the current licence, the minister of information can make the same requests, including asking for sources, without the right to appeal.

The draft licence put forward by the government would allow an appeal against a decision of the broadcast commission, which is appointed by the governor general, to a judge in chambers. This is not satisfactory to a

station which for the last 14 years has lived under the spectre of licence which requires them to disclose sources of information, at the request of the minister, without any right of appeal, Seaga told Parliament on Tuesday. We ... have to indicate that the government does not intend to go any further than it has in the liberalization of this provision, Seaga said. The government must retain the right where it can ensure that, in the national interest, under certain circumstances, not be broadcast [sentence as received].

The Radio Jamaica board met on Wednesday to discuss Seaga's statement and the developments in the issue. Although there has been no statement on the meeting it appeared that the board was maintaining its request for the removal of the clause. I can't answer what is the next step, but the issue is one of dialogue and negotiation, Managing Director Lester Spaulding told CANA on Thursday. Company officials dispute Seaga's suggestion that RJR has lived quietly in the past with a provision that it now found objectionable. In the first place, they say, the current licence, in force since 1973, was negotiated by foreign owners. The licence was originally for 10 years with the option at the end of the period for renegotiation or a five-year extension, officials said.

In 1982, when Radio Jamaica sought to renegotiate the licence, the government chose the option of extension. For four-and-a-half years we have been seeking to renegotiate the licence, but the issue has only taken urgency on the part of the government because of the issue of divestment, one source said. The previous licence was issued to rediffusion who were foreign owners with vastly different concepts and sensitivities to the issue of freedom of speech and constitutional rights than a local company with a locally resident board, he said.

The previous government of the Socialist Prime Minister Michael Manley acquired Radio Jamaica in 1977 and developed a unique ownership structure for the company. The government held a quarter of the shares, but the rest were sold to workers and mass-based institutions such as churches, trade unions, credit unions and building societies.

Seaga, as part of his programme of divesting government enterprises, announced last year, said the remaining shares would be sold in public offer on the stock market. Settling the licence issue is important to the divestment. The licence must be settled for the government to produce its prospectus and give prospective share buyers a picture of a stable entity with a viable future.

The question of the future of RJR's licence and divestment of the shares, which are both under discussion and negotiations, will await further developments in that area (of dispute), Seaga said.

RJR officials suggest that the concessions sought are important to the proposed share issue, for the negotiations are for a licence in perpetuity. The licence is to be opened for the rest of the life of the station, Spaulding explained.

U.S. Troop Mobilization to Honduras Protested

PA172150 Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish 1955 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Mexico has condemned at the UN Security Council the dispatching of U.S. troops [to Honduras]. Ambassador Mario Moya Palencia said the military mobilization violates the UN Charter's principles of coexistence.

This is a regrettable action that does not contribute to the peace efforts launched by Central Americans and supported by the region, as well as virtually the entire international community, Moya said at a UN Security Council meeting called in the aftermath of the British military maneuvers on the Malvinas Islands.

At the United Nations, UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar asked all those involved in the incidents at the Honduran-Nicaraguan border to moderate themselves. Perez de Cuellar said he is studying Nicaragua's request to send a commission to the border.

Delegates to Joint U.S. Meeting Discuss Talks

PA121323 Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish 1955 GMT 7 Mar 88

[Text] Senator Salvador Neme Castillo and Deputy Juan Jose Bremer, president and vice president, respectively, of the Mexican delegation to the United States, said Mexican-U.S. relations must be carried out with freedom, maturity, and respect, and must be free of threats. They agreed that the 28th interparliamentary meeting shows that bilateral relations cannot be subject to electoral postures stemming from opportunistic practices, because they can only generate temporary gains.

In a news conference held before returning to Mexico, Senator Neme Castillo, coordinator of the political committee, said that among their achievements were the mutual conviction that multilateral organizations should be strengthened, that the fight against drug trafficking at all stages was necessary, and that ways to obtain amnesty for undocumented people should be sought. Castillo also announced that an intergovernmental commission to fight drug trafficking will be created.

According to Deputy Bremer, coordinator of the finance and economy meetings, it was widely accepted that Mexico's economic recovery affects U.S. recovery; therefore, protectionist barriers should be dropped, and Mexico's trade balance should show a surplus.

New Leftist Movement Backs Cardenas Candidacy

PA131723 Mexico City XHTV Television in Spanish 0200 GMT 10 Mar 88

[Text] The creation of a new leftist movement that will back Cuauhtemoc Cardenas' candidacy was announced today.

Following the frustrated attempts by leftist parties to run a single presidential candidate, the left has again divided itself with the creation of the Movement Toward Socialism [Movimiento al Socialismo], MAS. The group is made up of members from the PMS [Mexican Socialist Party], PRT [Workers' Revolutionary Party], and organizations such as CU [expansion unknown], STUNAM [Trade Union of the National Autonomous University of Mexico], and the Feminist Movement [Movimiento Feminista], among others, as well as citizens without any party affiliation but with left-wing views.

At a news conference, the commission promoting MAS said the new organization supports Cuauhtemoc Cardenas' candidacy and intends to unify the Mexican socialist struggle.

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] We respect the leftist political parties; some of us belong to those parties. We recognize their presidential candidates; however, we reject their decision to rule out the possibility of having a single candidate representing the progressive, leftist forces. [end recording]

Although they said MAS members can be members of political parties, they denied the new group itself is a political party. They defined it as an independent organization whose members act not on behalf of a party or organization but as independent socialists.

Belize

Opposition Makes Gains in Local Elections

FL171716 Bridgetown CANA in English 1703 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Belmopan, Belize, March 17, CANA—The opposition People's United Party (PUP) has won control of four of seven town boards in municipal elections held here on Wednesday, according to results announced on Thursday. The ruling United Democratic Party (UDP) took control of the other three.

A total of 49 seats, seven on each town board, were contested in the elections.

The PUP won 29 seats, including the seven in the island resort town of San Pedro, Ambergris Caye, where it had formed a coalition with the San Pedro United Movement. The United Democratic Party (UDP) won the other 20 seats.

The UDP was in control of six of the seven municipalities as a result of town board elections which were last held here in March 1985, just three months after they had won a sweeping victory in the December 1984 general elections, winning 21 of the 28 seats in the House of Representatives.

The REPORTER newspaper in its most recent edition said that the election was a weather vane for the government of Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel.

The PUP made in-roads in several town boards by winning six of seven seats in Orange Walk Town, which has been a UDP stronghold.

The opposition also made a breakthrough in the southern town of Punta Gorda by winning three of the seven seats of that town board which was always dominated by the UDP.

The northern town of Corozal, near to Mexico, voted a solid UDP town board while the western border town of Benque Viejo del Carmen ousted the former UDP-dominated town board and replaced them with seven PUP representatives.

The southern town of Dangriga also gave to PUP six of seven seats in the municipality, but the twin-town of San Ignacio and Santa Elena in the west returned the UDP to office.

Voting was slow up to mid-day Wednesday when only about 30 per cent of the total number of registered voters went to the polls. But by the time voting ended at six o'clock 69.6 per cent or just under 13,000 of the 18,640 registered voters in these municipalities had voted.

This was lower than in 1985 when 71 per cent of the voters went to the polls in municipal elections held that year.

Municipal election are held here every three years. General elections are held every five years. The next is slated for December 1989.

Costa Rica

Reinforcements Sent to Panamanian Border

PA171944 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 1835 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] This morning the Public Security Ministry decided to reinforce the Southern Command Post headquartered in Paso Canoas, in case of unforeseen situations at the Panama border. Although relative calm is reported in Paso Canoas, this morning Civil Police leaders decided to send reinforcements to be on alert for any problems in the area.

As most Costa Ricans know, there have traditionally been good relations between Panamanians and Costa Ricans at the Paso Canoas border. Panama is on one side of the street, and Costa Rica is on the other; and one can travel easily from side to side. These measures must be taken at the border with Panama because of the problems it is experiencing. Civil Police Director Juan Felix Barrantes today decided to send reinforcements to the border in the face of possible problems in the area. Everything remains calm, but at any moment the situation can change.

As is known, there is a Panamanian Defense Forces command post next to the border post, and the David garrison is only 35 km away. That garrison contains the operational command for Chiriqui Province and one of the most important military detachments after the general headquarters in Panama's capital.

El Salvador

Venceremos Reports on Fighting With Army

PA171546 [Editorial Report] (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador at 0000 GMT on 16 March broadcasts a series of reports on FMLN military actions.

The first report indicates that "in the last few hours, urban commandos have multiplied their actions in San Salvador," blowing up many telephone distribution boxes. Meanwhile, "FMLN urban commandos sabotaged a telephone distribution box in the city of Santa Ana at 0730 on 14 March."

The station reports that "Lieutenant Rafael Antonio Guerra and other soldiers were wounded in a guerrilla ambush on a military truck at the 19 km marker on the road to Suchitoto." It adds that when another Army unit showed up, "it activated mines placed by our units and an Army lieutenant was killed." The station does not give the date of this action.

At 1700 on 15 March, "militia and guerrilla units seized Potonico and San Jose Cancasque in Chalatenango Department." The station states that during the 3-hour seizure "a combative rally was held with the residents of Potonico and San Jose Cancasque."

Continuing with reports on actions in Chalatenango Department, the station states that "on 13 March, FMLN guerrilla units clashed with Atlacatl Battalion units in Cordoncillo, [name indistinct] Canton, El Caballete, and Las Vueltas, inflicting 13 casualties on the Atlacatl Battalion."

In the last report, the station indicates that "on 10 March, a unit of FMLN sapppers placed a booby trap in the area where civil defense members would pass in El Pinar, Metapan jurisdiction, in Santa Ana Department." The explosive device left "a large number of wounded, including five paramilitary men who are in serious condition."

Further on Clashes

PA171717 [Editorial report] (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador at 0000 GMT on 17 March broadcasts a series of military reports on clashes between the Salvadoran Army and the FMLN. Several of these reports again note actions covered in the previous days's bulletins.

One report states that on 14 March, FMLN units placed mines in the path of enemy troops on Corral De Mulas Hill, inflicting four casualties. At 1030 on the same day guerrilla units inflicted three more casualties at El Tamarindo hamlet and at 1230 guerrilla units inflicted another casualty at Quebrada El Caracol Canton. At 1745, FMLN units inflicted another casualty by sniper. On 14 March, FMLN guerrilla units injured a member of an enemy patrol in the San Luis de la Reina area, north of San Miguel Department. At 2300 on the same day, clandestine militia units occupied a sector of the Pan-American Highway near La Crusadilla, San Vicente Department. The militia units carried out extensive propaganda activity in that area.

Another report notes that at 1900 on 15 March, guerrilla units injured a member of the Bracamonte Battalion at Achiote hamlet.

The last report states that at 0100 on 16 March the FMLN sabotaged a power plant located at El Salamo Canton, north of Santa Ana City. "Our guerrilla units carried out the attack with peoples rifle fire." "We inflicted five casualties on a national police position." In addition, another unit sabotaged two high tension towers and one transformer. The attack lasted 45 minutes.

Honduras

Officials on Nicaraguan Border Situation

Lopez Contreras Remarks

PA180008 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1644 GMT 16 Mar 88

[News conference held by Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras with local reporters in Tegucigalpa—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] According to reports from Washington, there have been incursions by Sandinist troops. What is the government's official report on this?

[Lopez] Thank you. I regret that this news conference, held on the occasion of the inauguration of the new Foreign Ministry building, has been somewhat complicated by recent important events taking place at the border.

We have been receiving reports over the past few days regarding the concentration of troops observed at the border, specifically where the Bocay and the Coco Rivers meet in Olancho Department. A large concentration of Nicaraguan troops—EPS troops—has been observed. As a result, Honduran troops have also noticed that unarmed Nicaraguan citizens have entered Honduran territory.

In view of the situation and because of the unusual concentration of troops, the Honduran Government, through the president of the Republic, has directly contacted President Ortega over the phone, urging and demanding the withdrawal of troops that have been concentrating menacingly as they increase tension and produce insecurity in the border region. In the same manner, the president has asked him to instruct the troops he has sent to the Honduran border to refrain from crossing the border, and if some of those troops have already done so, to order their immediate return to Nicaraguan territory.

In addition, President Azcona has been in touch with Presidents Duarte, Cerezo, and Arias, urging them to ask President Ortega to refrain from conducting aggressive military actions against the Republic of Honduras. That is the situation to date. Following this news conference, I will be attending a meeting of the National Armed Forces Council, which is meeting now to review the situation in order to plan the military actions to be taken should the EPS persist in its threatening attitude or if it violates the national territory or endangers the lives of Honduran citizens at the border.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] if the reported invasion of Honduran territory by the Sandinists really occurred?

[Lopez] We must proceed according to internal information we have received and verified. In that regard, I will meet with the Armed Forces to release objective information on the situation, with the prudence that has always characterized the Honduran Government and its Armed Forces. However, we will act with the firmness the circumstances warrant.

[Reporter] Again, the reports originate in the United States. Why is it that the Honduran Government does not issue those reports?

[Lopez] We are facing a tense situation at the border. Those of you who have been in Honduras during the past 7 years should recall that similar situations in the past have created panic throughout the country, to the extent that 3 or 4 years ago housewives, those responsible for schoolchildren, and so forth bought large stocks of food every weekend to prepare for an armed conflict that fortunately has not occurred.

Therefore, the Honduran Government and its Armed Forces have decided to adopt the necessary measures that will allow them to confront any emergency. However, we do not wish to create panic among the people. We hope to create trust, and I ask that you be prudent and trust the government and the Armed Forces.

[Reporter] Mr Secretary, I represent [name indistinct] news. A few minutes ago a White House spokesperson said that 1,500 Sandinist soldiers had crossed the border into Honduras. If this information is confirmed, it would seriously hinder the Guatemala peace plan. What stand will Honduras adopt in light of this new aggression on the part of the Sandinist government?

[Lopez] It is a difficult question. However, the truth is that nonfulfillment of a cease-fire leading to internal national reconciliation violates the Esquipulas II peace plan. Military actions against foreign territory worsen the conditions that existed before the signing of Esquipulas II.

[Reporter] Mr Minister, does Nicaragua's invasion of Honduran territory jeopardize the meeting scheduled for [date indistinct]?

[Lopez] We must examine next week's meeting in Guatemala in light of recent events. You are completely right. It is clear that conducting a dialogue with an invaded territory is not the best of conditions. Therefore, this situation must end; otherwise, the Nicaraguan Government would be solely responsible for hindering the Central American peace process.

[Reporter] Have Honduran troops clashed with the Sandinists who supposedly entered Honduran territory? Has the Honduran Government requested support from the United States for the mobilization of troops to the border?

[Lopez] I cannot answer that question. It is one of the topics that will be discussed at the Armed Forces Council. However, I can assure you that the Honduran Government and Armed Forces are ready to carry out all necessary actions that fall within their legitimate defense of the integrity of the national territory and the security of its population.

[Reporter] A few days ago a U.S. paper reported the presence of Nicaraguan contras on Swan Island. Could this be the Managua government's response to that presence? I would also like you to tell us what specific actions will be carried out immediately if the alleged invasion into Honduran territory is confirmed.

[Lopez] We do not know. I just said that after I finish here, I will attend a meeting, in which we will discuss all these topics and plan our actions. Concerning the reports published by THE MIAMI HERALD—I believe you said THE MIAMI HERALD—the answer is that Swan Island is a Honduran island with Honduran Navy installations. I have not heard that the Sandinist government, which as I understand would be affected if planes were departing from Swan Island to harass Nicaragua, has protested through its foreign minister at the executive commission, because I describe the Nicaraguan foreign minister as a very diligent man when it comes to defending his country's interests.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] is there a [words indistinct]?

[Lopez] No, [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Mr Foreign Minister, did the agreement signed at Esquipulas [words indistinct] establish a form of sanction or something if there is a Nicaraguan aggression?

[Lopez] Probably only the moral sanctions of international contempt.

[Reporter] Mr Foreign Minister, at the beginning of the news conference you said the Sandinist groups' incursions have been taking place for several days. When did you learn about that, and why did you wait until now to call for a security council meeting?

[Lopez] The fact that [words indistinct] this meeting does not mean that we did not demand it yesterday. In other words, you knew about this meeting today, but the situation has been carefully analyzed from the viewpoint of the best defense of Honduran interests and the peace and calm of Hondurans and their families. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] (?Is there) anything specific regarding that charge? Could this be a U.S. tactic to carry out a direct intervention in Nicaragua? What is the Honduran Government doing to [words indistinct]?

[Lopez] The government is carefully studying this situation. We are following the old saying: Trust, but make sure. We are basing our decisions on information received from our own security organizations.

[Reporter] Have you contacted the presidents and foreign ministers of the other four countries in the area? Have you informed the Contadora and Support Groups of this situation in which Nicaragua is involved and the fact that it is threatening the Honduran border area?

[Lopez] Yes, at the top level. The president is doing this.

[Reporter] Mr Secretary, what is the Honduran Government doing regarding the Panamanian situation? What is the Honduran Government willing to do [words indistinct]?

[Lopez] Honduras has already adopted its position. From the diplomatic view, we feel the position we have adopted is the most convenient. Honduras believes that when there is unrest in a country, the best move is to recall its ambassador and wait until the situation clears. We have recalled our ambassador to Tegucigalpa, and we hope the situation in Panama will clear up and stabilize.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] current situation along the Honduran-Nicaraguan border?

[Lopez] We hope the Nicaraguan Government will not destroy the peace process. Thank you.

Officer on Actions

PA180200 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 2226 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Interview with Colonel Manuel Enrique Suarez Benavides, director of the Honduran Armed Forces Public Relations Office, by unidentified local reporters; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Suarez] EPS troops have crossed into Honduras. In light of the situation over the past few days and today, the Honduran Government has contacted the other Central American presidents to try and control the situation, avoid heightening the Central American crisis, and protect the peace process that Honduras promotes and respects. This has been the reason why very little information has been released. The president has talked with the other Central American presidents and asked them to ask Nicaragua, the Sandinists, to withdraw its troops from Honduras.

[Reporter] Is there fighting between the Sandinists and contras? Is the Honduran Army involved?

[Suarez] There have been strong confrontations between Sandinist soldiers and Nicaraguan Resistance members in the past few days. These confrontations have taken place within Nicaraguan territory. There have been no confrontations between the EPS and the Honduran Armed Forces.

[Reporter] Will the Sandinists who crossed into Honduras be expelled from the country with the U.S. troop reinforcements?

[Suarez] No. The Honduran Armed Forces are capable of repelling the EPS. We have not done this yet because of the negotiations underway. As you know, armed confrontations are handled by the executive branch, by the president of the Republic, through the foreign and interior secretariats. The Armed Forces are under the president.

[Reporter] Why have the Honduran people not been advised of this situation? Why are U.S. troops being called? It is being said that the U.S. soldiers could get into the action at a specific moment. Will they?

[Suarez] We hope not. What we have is an aid pact. In that pact, the U.S. Government committed itself to supporting the Honduran Government in case of an aggression on the part of a foreign country, as is the case now. However, those troops were called in because of the size of the EPS. You are quite aware that Honduras is at a disadvantage in regard to numbers should there be a confrontation or should the Sandinist aggression increase. The U.S. troops are visible support; they are here should it become necessary to call on them.

[Reporter] Commander Ortega announced his position a while ago. He said he would convoke the OAS Permanent Council and ask them to study the situation. He said Honduras would be given a deadline to withdraw its troops stationed along the border. This would include the U.S. troops. What position has the Honduran Armed Forces adopted?

[Suarez] All countries are sovereign. We cannot order President Ortega to withdraw the troops he has within his country, and no one can order the Honduran Government to withdraw troops stationed within Honduran territory.

[Reporter] Would you describe the situation as serious?

[Suarez] Yes. Honduras continues to use peaceful procedures. It is trying to resolve an overall problem in a peaceful manner. Honduras has urged President Ortega to withdraw his troops from Honduras to avoid using an extreme measure, such as using the Armed Forces in the area attacked by the EPS.

[Reporter] It has been said that the Honduran Armed Forces and the Honduran Government have given the Nicaraguan Government a deadline to withdraw its troops. What is the deadline?

[Suarez] I do not know how long they were given, but I do know they were given adequate time to withdraw their troops and return them to Nicaragua.

[Reporter] Is it true that Chinooks, the U.S. helicopters, have been flying over the border area?

[Suarez] No, that is false.

[Reporter] How would you describe Commander Ortega's attitude?

[Suarez] He is trying to defend a position that cannot be defended. The presence of foreign troops on foreign territory cannot be justified.

Officer on Bombing

PA180234 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 0015 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Telephone interview with Colonel Manuel Enrique Suarez Benavides, director of the Honduran Armed Forces Public Relations Office, with unidentified reporter—live]

[Text] [Reporter] According to an ACAN-EFE dispatch, the Honduran Armed Forces Public Relations Office confirmed the bombing of Sandinist forces within Honduran territory. The Honduran High Command did not disclose the exact bombing site, but it confirmed that all planes had returned to bases after inflicting serious damage on the enemy. Colonel Manuel Enrique Suarez Benavides, director of the Armed Forces Public Relations Office, told ACAN that all land and air operations had been carried out with precision. professionalism, and in defense of our territory.

The officer noted that reports from Managua that the bombing was made on Nicaraguan territory—specifically in Las Hamacas, where there is a large troop concentration and a command post—are absurd. He added that the number of casualties would have been very large if this area had been attacked, and Sandinists themselves say there were no casualties.

Radio America listeners, we are contacting Col Suarez to confirm the press agency report:

Colonel, good afternoon, is it true that the Honduran Armed Forces have bombed Sandinist troops on Honduran territory?

[Suarez] No. We said there have been Honduran Air Force operations in the Honduran sector of Bocay. We have not said that Sandinist troops have been bombed.

[Reporter] The Central American dispatch said you confirmed the bombing to this agency, but the exact place of the bombing had not been specified.

[Suarez] Correct. We confirmed to the agency that the Honduran Air Force conducted operations in Bocay, within Honduran territory. This is the information that was given.

[Reporter] Do you have any information on possible damage inflicted on Sandinist troops?

[Suarez] This took place this afternoon, and we still do not have specific information on results of the mission. However, we believe we will have more information tomorrow morning.

[Reporter] Do you know the precise location that was bombed?

[Suarez] I do not have that information now.

[Reporter] Thank you very much, Col Suarez.

EPS Helicopter Downed

PA180429 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 0239 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Attention! Pay close attention! We interrupt our sportscast to relay information we have just received regarding events on the Honduran-Nicaraguan border. Attention! There is a report of an attack by Honduran airplanes on Nicaraguan territory. Pay close attention. There is a report of an invasion, or at least an attack, by Honduran airplanes on Nicaraguan territory.

Apparently, the Honduran Air Force detected a Sandinist helicopter in Honduran territory. We repeat: The Honduran Armed Forces detected a Sandinist helicopter in Honduran territory. It was shot down by the airplanes, which entered Sandinist territory this afternoon. Here is more information from our colleague, Jose Hernan Reyes Pineda:

[Reyes] Thank you very much. The most important thing at this time is that the helicopter was reportedly found in Honduran territory, that is, it was flying in Bocay's airspace, and it was shot down by Honduran Air Force F-5 airplanes. This information is attributed to Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras, who had this verified by the Honduran Armed Forces and in reports he received from the site.

We repeat, Radio America listeners: Honduras maintains that the downing of a helicopter gunship today on the Nicaraguan border occurred on the Honduran side, and not on the Nicaraguan side as maintained by the Sandinists, who have even protested to the U.S. State Department in a note Father Miguel D'Escoto Brockman sent to U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz.

Radio America listeners, Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras has confirmed this information. [passage omitted]

According to information received here by Radio America, the foreign minister has made one of his most emphatic statements on this subject, confirming that the Honduran Armed Forces were obliged to send a fleet of planes, because it was confirmed that Sandinist helicopters had staged an invasion, proof of which is the very helicopter that was downed. [passage omitted]

Nicaragua

Officials on Border Clashes, U.S. Troops

Ortega News Conference

PA171804 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1609 GMT 17 Mar 88

[News conference held by President Daniel Ortega with unidentified reporters at the auditorium of the Information and Press Directorate of the Presidency in Managua—live]

[Text] [Ortega] As is well known, the U.S. Government, which is characterized by a policy of dishonesty, lies, and deceit, yesterday was once again unmasked when, on the one hand, it was denying that it had decided to send U.S. troops to Honduras in an open threat against Nicaragua and, on the other hand, it had already made the decision. It had already been made because yesterday afternoon when I got in touch with President Azcona at around 1800, he told me that on the previous night at 2300 he had asked the U.S. Government for help in transporting by helicopter Honduran troops to the area where the mercenary forces have been in combat on the border with Honduras, that is to say, to the area where the camps of the mercenary forces are located. President Azcona assured me at that time that U.S. troops were not going to arrive. However, a few hours later, we learned about the U.S. Government's official statement indicating that it had decided to send U.S. troops to Honduran territory in what is a further escalation of the war against Nicaragua.

It is clear that the mercenary forces have been defeated; it is clear that the United States wants to manipulate and use Honduras and its Army. They want Nicaraguan and Honduran blood to be shed and then to walk over this blood to invade Nicaragua. This is how we view the U.S. offensive plan to bring its forces to Honduran territory in an open threat against Nicaragua. At the same time, the plan is trying to protect, to save the remnants of the mercenary forces. We consider this to be a truly dangerous action by the United States.

That is why, independent of the efforts we have already begun with the UN and OAS secretaries general to have the commission formed under the framework of Esquipulas, known as the verification commission—comprised of the Contadora and Support Groups, the United Nations, and the OAS—we will have this commission, under the UN and OAS secretaries general's sponsorship, proceed to carry out an on-site inspection inside Nicaraguan border territory and make the respective evaluations and recommendations. If Honduras is willing, the commission can also go to the Honduran side to verify whether or not the mercenary bases are located there.

Independent of this already adopted decision, today we are also convoking the UN Security Council to report these actions which violate international law, the Central American peace efforts, and the negotiating process we have been promoting and which point to an escalation of the war that the United States has been waging against Nicaragua.

Because its option to destroy Nicaragua through the mercenary forces failed, the United States is now using its own troops and is intervening with its own troops. It is getting those troops closer to the scene of operations to launch its aggression against Nicaragua.

Yesterday we clearly saw how another lie came out of the mouths of U.S. officials when, only an hour before U.S. television announced the dispatching of troops, United States officials stated that they were not sending troops. A U.S. State Department official asserted they were not sending troops. Hours [as heard] later the U.S. official announced that the United States was sending troops. We cannot believe this whole plan the United States is carrying out does not aim at creating a new situation to get U.S. troops directly involved in its terrorist attacks and its intention of destroying the Nicaraguan peoples Sandinist revolution.

The arguments used by the Reagan administration and those used by some presidents are senseless, because they try to justify the U.S. escalation. In the first place, we have not signed any cease-fire agreement with the mercenary forces. Therefore, neither the mercenary forces' criminal actions against the Nicaraguan people nor the combative actions of the people's Army to defend the Nicaraguan people have ceased, simply because we have not agreed on a cease-fire. For that same reason we are (?trying) hard to meet on 21 March in Sapoa. We are trying to meet to finally reach a cease-fire agreement within the framework of the Esquipulas agreements. The cease-fire would lead to the dismantling of the military forces of the counterrevolution and their participation in the civic struggle in Nicaragua by using the pluralist opportunity [espacio] the revolution grants.

If we have not signed a cease-fire agreement, it would be absurd to try to demand Nicaragua not fight, pursue, or deal blows to the mercenaries while the mercenaries launch indiscriminate attacks on the civilian population.

Logically, we will continue our offensive against the mercenary forces until a cease-fire agreement is signed. The fact that they are transporting troops belonging to the 82d or 7th Divisions by helicopter and taking them

to Honduran territory in an open threat against Nicaragua will not limit the defensive capacity of the Nicaraguan people. We will not reduce our defense activities. We will not take one step backward concerning the defense of our country's dignity. The presence of the U.S. troops, who are already arriving in Honduran territory, will not frighten the Nicaraguan people. They are logically trying to frighten the Nicaraguan Government. If the United States, if President Reagan decides to use those forces against the Nicaraguan people, we are already willing to fight against those forces. We are here willing to eliminate those famous forces of the 82d Airborne Division.

It is not like Superman will come here to destroy the Nicaraguan people. Superman was defeated in Vietnam and Superman was defeated by Sandino as well a few years ago, and Superman would be defeated again here in Nicaragua if he were to deploy his troops here. Even if they come with bombers and helicopters, regardless of what they bring, they will be defeated.

In other words, we are not going to take a step backward in the combative spirit of our forces to continue hitting the mercenary forces. It is not a matter of who goes to Sapoa in a better position. Instead, it is a matter of the nonexistence of a cease-fire. If the mercenaries have maintained their criminal attitude and criminal attacks, we have the obligation to protect the Nicaraguan people, defend national interests, and continue to vigorously hit the mercenary forces.

With or without the 82d Airborne Division, with or without Yankee troops, we will maintain the defense of Nicaragua's territorial integrity and the lives of the Nicaraguan people. This should be very clear because the United States is being totally unmasked as a factor of aggression and destabilization in the Central American region. With its statements, it is showing that the mercenary camps are there in Honduran territory. There are not only those camps in the border area where battles have been waged in the past few days, where the counterrevolutionaries have been annihilated, and where those camps have been dismantled and the counterrevolutionaries have fled like rats. We also know that there are camps in various locations such as La Lodosa, Capire, Yamales, and El Amparo. There is also the strategic command in the area where there has been fighting on the border with Nicaragua. There is the military training center of the mercenaries (?in the area). There is a network of support and rest camps along the banks of the Coco River in Honduran territory. Up until 16 March those camps were along the banks of the Coco River in Nicaraguan territory. Those camps are no longer there. The EPS troops are there now.

We will not give up the defense of Nicaraguan territory. In other words, we will not withdraw our troops after we have recovered part of our territory that was being occupied by the mercenary forces simply because the Yankees are threatening to use their troops. They are manipulating Honduras to get it to fight Nicaragua so that not only Nicaraguan blood but also Honduran blood will be shed while they encourage the war. They will then launch themselves against Nicaragua.

There are other camps. There are airports and military bases. It is also clear that in this action, the U.S. Government has publicly admitted that the mercenaries' camps are in Honduran territory, that it is the owner of those camps, and that it issues the orders in those camps.

In addition, the U.S. Government, mocking the latest votes in the U.S. Congress, which has twice voted against the financing of the mercenary forces, is taking advantage of this situation so that, through these troops, it can send the mercenaries not only the so-called humanitarian aid, which is nothing but logistical aid—it will send the logistical aid and the preparations are already underway in the various airports in Honduras, including the one at El Aguacate. This can be verified by international mechanisms and the press if they are permitted to enter El Aguacate. They will find there all the activity of the mercenary forces. The United States will try to take advantage of the deployment of these U.S. Army forces to Honduran territory to provide the mercenaries the logistics that the U.S. Congress has not approved for them. Furthermore, it will take advantage of the deployment to deliver to them the military aid that the U.S. Congress has not approved for them. In other words, it will take advantage of this to deliver to them weapons, provisions, clothing, food, medicine, etc., and to also provide them with military support.

In view of this situation, I was telling you that we are convoking the UN Security Council to report this and, depending on the development of events, we will seek a resolution at the UN Security Council. We call on the United States to stop this military escalation. If it is really interested in peace, in the fulfillment of the Esquipulas agreements and the achievement of concrete results in the next meeting in Sapoa, the United States will have to withdraw the U.S. troops from Honduran territory. It will have to withdraw them and return them to their U.S. bases because we are facing a military escalation. We are not fighting the mercenary forces with foreign forces. We are fighting the mercenary forces with the soldiers of the Nicaraguan people, with the Nicaraguan peasants, workers, and youths. Those are the soldiers who are defeating the mercenary forces. Those are the soldiers who have gone to expel the mercenary forces from their camps. However, the mercenary forces, as a U.S. instrument, are requiring, as part of the U.S. overall policy, the deployment of U.S. forces to Honduran territory in a military escalation.

This would be tantamount to Nicaragua demanding Latin America's support and then Latin American troops arriving to help Nicaragua counter the situation. In other words, it would be tantamount to troops from all over Latin America and the Caribbean arriving to help Nicaragua overcome the situation caused by the aggression

from a world power like the United States, which has always attacked, invaded, and intervened in Latin American countries throughout its relationship with Latin America and the Caribbean.

However, we are not demanding troops from other countries; we are not demanding troops from Latin America or any other country, because the Nicaraguan people have enough fighters to defend their own sovereignty, integrity, and the right to build their own future. Consequently, we demand that the U.S. Government immediately withdraw its troops from Honduras, thus helping the 21 March meeting in Sapoa achieve positive results. The current actions of the United States are simply seeking to preclude a meeting in Sapoa.

On behalf of the Nicaraguan people, government, and FSLN National Directorate, we issue our greetings, recognition, and support to all the comrades of the EPS and fighters who are in their positions to participate in the fight against the mercenary forces. We tell them: The order is to keep up the fight and not lower your guard! We will not lower our guard because the 82d Airborne Division is in Honduras, threatening Nicaragua! We will step up our actions against all the mercenary forces throughout our national territory! We will defend our country's integrity! We will defend every inch of our homeland and, if need be, face and defeat the U.S. forces—if they dare launch an open aggression against our territory and people!

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] the OAS' Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty [TIAR] given the U.S. troops' presence and the possibility that border clashes might occur between the two armies?

[Ortega] Well, that will depend on what takes place. We have clearly stated that the TIAR is designed to defend the Latin American countries' interests and sovereignty, and not to attack them. We face the threat of direct U.S. action against Nicaragua, and Nicaragua reserves the right to request the Latin American nations' support against this stepped-up U.S. military action. However, I repeat, Nicaragua is not demanding soldiers; Nicaragua demands that the United States fulfill international agreements, respect international laws, and stop encouraging actions that cause the Esquipulas peace plan's failure and preclude the meeting in Sapoa.

[Reporter] Mr President, a similar situation arose 2 years ago. I would like you to comment on the similarities and differences between the 1986 aggression and this one in 1988.

[Ortega] Well, the situation is much more critical this time because it is marked by a stepped up aggression. On that occasion the United States exerted pressure on Honduras so that Honduras said that Nicaragua had invaded them, thus justifying the use of U.S. helicopters to transport Honduran troops to the border areas where the clashes had taken place.

Now the situation is qualitatively different because, first, the United States is admitting that the camps are located in Honduran territory. It is admitting that it is worried over the fate of the counterrevolution. Therefore, its actions are aimed at saving its plan of aggression against Nicaragua. In addition, it is deploying troops. (?We understand) that it is deploying troops from U.S. territory. This is an open challenge to the Central American peace efforts. This is a clear threat against Nicaragua.

They are pressuring Honduras to serve as an instrument, or as cannon fodder, so Honduran blood would be the first to be shed. In the end, this will serve as the base for their offensive action. They figure that, in this way, more Nicaraguan and Honduran blood will be shed than U.S. blood.

[Reporter] Mr President, you have asked for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Honduras in order to hold the talks in Sapoa. If the United States does not withdraw, will you or will you not go to the Sapoa talks?

[Ortega] We have already decided to go to the Sapoa talks. However, if the United States wants to contribute to a better climate in Sapoa, if the United States wants to contribute toward reaching an agreement in Sapoa, it must withdraw its troops from Honduras. Through its troops, the United States is striving to void the meeting in Sapoa. In sum, it is striving for the contras, as an instrument of U.S. policies, to say: We are not going to Sapoa. If the counterrevolutionaries go to Sapoa, the United States wants them to place such obstacles in the way of the talks that they do not produce any immediate positive results. However, all of us are interested in reaching a (?minimum) agreement at this meeting in Sapoa.

[Reporter] Mr President, have EPS troops crossed the border; have EPS troops entered Honduran territory? My second question is: Is this conflict going to negatively affect the Sapoa meeting?

[Ortega] This is not a question of whether or not EPS troops entered Honduran territory. The point is that we have over... [changes thought] we have... [2-minute break in reception] let them prove it. Therefore, this is a war, or an invasion, that only exists in the warped mind of U.S. leaders who are used to fabricating big lies and defrauding or deceiving the international public. In this case, they have imposed on Honduras, they have imposed on Honduras [repeats himself] the obligation... [changes thought] They have forced Honduras to say: Yes, Nicaraguan troops entered Honduras, so we requested U.S. support. At no time can Honduras say that it is involved in a conflict or problem between Honduras and Nicaragua. Plainly, Honduras is repeating what U.S. leaders are forcing it to say. We know that U.S. leaders politically blackmail and pressure Honduras.

We have even been willing to reach agreements with Honduras to set controls on the border area. This time, we once again want to appeal to the Honduran Government and appeal to the Honduran military not to fall

into the trap. The U.S. leaders want to lure them into the trap of placing them as cannon fodder in the forefront of this offensive action against our country. This way, they would be justifying U.S. intervention against our country.

[Reporter] Mr President, how long will Sandinist troops remain in Honduras? How would you described the relations between Honduras and the United States, and why do you think Honduras asked the United States for help?

[Ortega] The Sandinist troops are in Nicaraguan territory, and they will remain in the place from where they dispersed the mercenaries, because that is Nicaraguan territory. The Sandinist troops will remain on the 140 square km of Nicaraguan territory along the Coco River, where the counterrevolutionary camps were. The troops in Honduras are U.S. troops that are occupying Honduran territory. The other troops in Honduras are the mercenary troops. The Honduran Army is there, as well. So, there are three armies in Honduras: the U.S. Army—logically the most important one—the Honduran Army; and the mercenary army, which has the network of camps I mentioned to you.

[Reporter] Mr President, sorry to ask you a question again, but the serious issue now is the presence of U.S. troops on Honduran territory, near the Nicaraguan border. The argument or justification they are using for the presence of those troops is that Sandinist troops have at one time penetrated Honduran territory. I would like to know the official Nicaraguan Government position on this. Have the Sandinist troops penetrated Honduras or not?

[Ortega] I repeat, that is not the issue. It is not a matter of whether the Sandinist troops penetrated or not. What has really penetrated Honduras is the aggression against Nicaragua, because the mercenary camps are there. That can be verified. The Sandinist troops simply recovered that portion of Nicaraguan territory that was being used by the mercenary forces to expand their network of camps, which as a part of that central command extends over the Coco River bank into Honduran territory. They had extended their network beyond the Coco River over 140 square km of Nicaraguan territory. In this operation, we proceeded to clean up the area of counterrevolutionaries, focusing on getting rid of the base they built inside Nicaraguan territory.

[Question indistinct]

[Ortega] We will continue to fight the mercenaries throughout the national territory. We will continue to face them, and we will not lower our guard. They will continue to conduct their terrorist activities. Here we have a military confrontation. We are not facing little angels who are running around without weapons. We are facing criminals, who in the United States would quickly be sentenced to the electric chair or to death in the sophisticated way in which the death penalty is presently applied in the United States.

[Reporter] Mr President, this morning Radio Liberacion said the deployment of troops to Honduran territory is a show staged by the Sandinist government to stop the workers' strike scheduled in Masaya on Sunday, as well as all the other strikes scheduled at a national level. What do you think about this?

[Ortega] I do not know what strike you are talking about. I do not know about any strikes in this country. I know about some outbreaks, but that is a secondary issue.

Vice President Comments

PA180310 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 2322 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Speech by Vice President Sergio Ramirez Mercado at the Nonaligned Plaza in Managua—live]

[Text] Well, comrades, this is one of the first mobilizations of the patriotic Nicaraguan people to demonstrate that at this moment, at this [words indistinct], (?our only strength) is the defense of our homeland and the defense of the revolution. This is a mobilization that [words indistinct] active all of these days up to the great general mobilization on Sunday and Monday in support of the FSLN and in support of the revolutionary government; at this time when [words indistinct] general alert to culminate with the cease-fire talks that the revolutionary government (?will begin) Monday in Sapoa.

It is (?true) that we are talking about a cease-fire. It is true that we continue to be bent on complying with the Esquipulas agreements, which the Nicaraguan president signed in Guatemala with the other Central American presidents. It is true that we will make every necessary effort to achieve peace through the path of negotiations, through the path of dialogue. However, it is also true [words indistinct] that we are going to continue to defend, arms in hand, our right to our total victory against the counterrevolutionary forces and the imperialist aggression. [applause]

Therefore, it would be good to review the course of events that have taken place during the last few days. The revolutionary government decided to deprive the Reagan administration of all pretexts and to begin directly discussing a cease-fire under the terms of the Esquipulas agreements and to do so at the highest level between a top-level Nicaraguan delegation headed by Commander of the Revolution Humberto Ortega and the delegation of the Reagan administration [words indistinct] to bring it to these talks in Sapoa. It is clear that during the cease-fire talks, no matter whether the mercenaries are sitting at the negotiating table or not, we will be actually talking to the Reagan government. They are using intermediaries in these talks and have not made up their minds to talk directly with the Nicaraguan revolutionary government.

However, the truth is that we have been forcing the Reagan admninistration to engage in these cease-fire talks. The way it is embodied in the Esquipulas agreements, the cease-fire means that the mercenary forces accept the cease-fire, agree to turn in their weapons, and agree to return to a civic, peaceful life in our country. We will not discuss Nicaragua's political future at the time we discuss a cease-fire.

Therefore, we led the Yankee government to a point where it had to engage in the cease-fire talks in Sapoa. Now its intention is to avoid attending the cease-fire talks. They do not want these cease-fire talks. Its intention is to continue pressuring the U.S. Congress into giving more funds to the counterrevolutionaries, i.e., the funds they have lost for the time being, for the time being. [repeats himself]

Amid these circumstances—the coming cease-fire talks in Sapoa, and the U.S. Congress refusing to give any more humanitarian aid or military aid, which is actually the same, to the contras, at least for the time being—the EPS, our cubs of the Patriotic Military Service, our combat forces have moved forward with their military campaign against the mercenaries. When we have talked about the cease-fire, we have never promised anyone that, because of the fact that there will be cease-fire talks in Sapoa, we would silence our rifles, because the war has continued and continues here. The terrorist forces, paid for and directed by the U.S. Government, have continued with their terrorism. They have continued attacking cooperatives; they have continued murdering women and children in the Nicaragua campaigns; they have continued attacking civilian vehicles [words indistinct]. Therefore, our armed people have continued exercising their right to legitimate defense.

That is why during the last few days our Army prepared this huge, heroic offensive and went hunting for the terrorists, for the mercenaries, in their own dens. [applause]

It caught them in their own dens; confronted them there; dislodged them from places they were occupying along the banks of the Coco River; persecuted them, deprived them of their positions; and sent them fleeing in disarray. Now what is happening? They are complaining that the EPS is fighting them, as if we were not in a war.

What kind of an enemy are the Nicaraguan people fighting that cries and complains when it is attacked?. This is what we have been hearing. The contras wonder how we can talk about peace talks and launch this merciless offensive, and the White House says Nicaragua is not acting in good faith because the EPS has gone and persecuted the poor contras in their dens. However, we have always spoken clearly. On 4 November, when President Ortega announced we were entering this phase of compliance with the Esquipulas agreement, the FSLN, the revolutionary government, clearly said through him that as long as they did not seek amnesty and as long as they did not accept a cease-fire, we would continue fighting here, day to day, hour to hour, and that blows would rain on them until the cease-fire was achieved. [applause]

That is exactly what the EPS is doing, what the heroic cubs of our battalions for unconventional warfare have been doing along the Nicaraguan-Honduran border. This military campaign will continue until Reagan's mercenaries accept the cease-fire as established in the Esquipulas agreements we signed in Guatemala.

Reagan's mercenaries have now been disbanded and defeated. They were not able to resist a confrontation with our troops, and they fled back to their dens in Honduran territory. To protest this defeat, the U.S. Government is now sending the 82d Airborne—3,500 of their best soldiers—to Honduras. They began arriving today at their base in Palmerola. Hercules planes were used to transport the troops—their so-called deluxe troops, their best soldiers—to Honduras. They [the U.S. Government] say the troops have been sent in to support the Honduran Government that is under attack; they say that Honduran territory is being invaded by Sandinist troops. All day yesterday the Honduran Government never complained of this invasion. The White House was the one that announced that the Honduran Government had asked the U.S. Government for help. Meanwhile, back in Tegucigalpa, the Honduran foreign secretary was saying that he was unaware of Sandinist soldiers crossing the border. He did say there was fighting along the border and that the Honduran Government was asking the people to remain calm and to not panic because there were no Sandinist troops on the Honduran side of the border. Meanwhile, the attack continued to advance. Reagan was already announcing that, at the reques' of the Honduran Government, he was deploying those soldiers to Honduras to show U.S. support for Honduras and to be ready to support the government in the face of a Sandinist attack.

Today, at 1515, F-5 planes—the planes the U.S. Government gave the Honduran Air Force a few months ago—bombed San Andres de Bocay in Nicaraguan territory. A substantial number of U.S. reporters were in San Andres de Bocay at the time of the bombing. We took those reporters to San Andres de Bocay today so that they could see with their own eyes and report back to the United States that we are fighting the contras on the Nicaraguan side. Since we are only fighting on the Nicaraguan side, we had no fear of taking the U.S. correspondents to that area. Those U.S. planes bombed a small town where U.S. reporters were visiting. Now it will be very easy for the U.S. reporters to say—we are waiting for them to return to Managua; we do not know what has happened to them—that U.S. jet planes, F-5 planes, bombed those positions in Nicaraguan territory, positions on the Nicaraguan side of the Coco River. This only proves despair on the part of the United States; despair in the face of the tremendous defeat we have

inflicted on the contras, the mercenaries. Now we can say that our operation has truly been successful and that it has become another military victory for the EPS troops. [applause]

With the same spirit with which our cubs have been fighting the mercenary forces along the banks of the Coco River—forces directed, paid, and organized by the Yankee government—we must now remain alert throughout the country. These are difficult days; these are decisive days. The Yankee government already knows that it cannot count on those mercenary forces to do something against the Nicaraguan revolution. This contra military project, financed, organized, and directed by the Reagan administration, is a failed project. These last efforts show that the counterrevolution's mercenary project has already failed. Since this project is a sinking ship, Reagan has no other alternative than to send his best troops to Honduras, at least to tell the contras that he is sorry about what is happening to them. [applause]

The Nicaraguan people, the working people of Nicaragua, the heroic people of Nicaragua who have spent the past years with their weapons in hand to defeat the invaders, have always known that this has been a costly war. It has cost us much in blood, sacrifice, and destruction. We have been fighting those mercenary forces for years, and now the Yankee forces have been stationed only a few kilometers from the border. This does not mean we are going to withdraw because the Yankee soldiers are there. If there is a Latin American people with experience in the struggle against invaders—a 100-year experience in the struggle against invaders—these people are, and they must know it, the Nicaraguan people. [applause]

Let the mercenaries come and sit with us at the negotiating table in Sapoa. We will be there. We will be waiting.... [15-minute break in reception]

F-5 Planes Attack

PA172333 Paris AFP in Spanish 2300 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Managua, 17 Mar (AFP)—Official sources report that two U.S.-made F-5 fighter planes attacked, with rockets, an EPS command outpost in the Bocay region, near the Honduran border, this afternoon.

The attack occurred when Colonel Javier Carrion, deputy chief of the EPS General Staff, was making statements to a group of newsmen, one of them an AFP correspondent.

The first reports indicated that the planes fired five rockets, which "fell very close" to the command outpost, Information Minister Manuel Espinoza reported. Initially, Espinoza did not give any figures as to dead or wounded among the troops or reporters.

U.S. Media Cited on Attack

PA172345 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 2320 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] We have a last minute report from Tony Gavin of our Monitoring Department. Six planes entered Nicaraguan territory and bombed our positions. Go ahead, Tony, and let us listen to the expansion of the news you monitored from the U.S. media.

[Gavin] CNN has just reported that six [figure as heard] U.S.-made F-5 planes and four French-made Super Mystere fighters were involved in today's air attack on Nicaragua. According to CNN, this report came from a U.S. source in Washington. It must be emphasized that the justification that the Reagan administration used to send these F-5 planes to Honduras approximately 6 months ago was that the Super Mystere planes were no good. However, they used four Super Mystere planes and two F-5 planes in the air attack in northern Nicaragua today.

Unidentified Planes Fired at Over Corinto

PA180401 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 0301 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Managua, AFP—Nicaraguan antiaircraft defenses opened fire this evening on two unidentified planes that flew over the Port of Corinto, 120 km northwest of Managua. This was reported by La Voz de Nicaragua, a government radio station. The official radio station said the planes flew in from a Honduran island in the Pacific Ocean. The station added that the island was probably Amapala.

U.S. Troop Deployment Act of 'Despair'

PA181405 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 17 Mar 88 p 3

[Editorial: "Maximum Danger; Time To Win"]

[Text] The seriousness of the military threats against Nicaragua announced by the Reagan administration has, with every justification, imposed a state of national alert.

In the past 6 years of the war of aggression U.S. rulers have never displayed the despair they displayed yesterday after their mercenary forces began to crumble in the face of the strong EPS offensive. The United States has reached the point of announcing, in disregard of its laws and the Esquipulas agreement, that they will use their own soldiers to attack Nicaragua.

This unprecedented threat, poorly disguised with the excuse of an alleged incursion of EPS troops into Honduras, shows that Washington is taking steps to escalate the aggression against Nicaragua to levels that can be extremely dangerous for the region. What is happening proves that having the contras as the main instrument in the aggressive policy against Nicaragua is no longer a priority in this move undertaken by Washington; quite the contrary. Militarily

worn-out, cornered in Honduran territory, and with negotiations underway to dismantle the contra organization, the contras have been rejected as a feasible alternative for the Yankee policy of aggression.

Reagan's big fuss this time is not aimed at getting Congress to approve more or less funds for the contras, but to get its approval for the direct use of his strategic forces against Nicaragua. That is what he is after.

Contrary to the negotiating spirit revitalized by Esquipulas III, supported by Nicaragua, and shared by an important part of the U.S. Congress, the White House is promoting a new military policy. The White House usually does this when its policy is on the verge of total failure. But this time they are not talking about just another escalation. The Reagan administration is viewing this situation as all or nothing, the military outcome of an aggression that can, in the process, wipe out the groundwork of the peace process agreed upon at Esquipulas.

By sending Yankee troops to the combat zone, the United States has taken the first step in this adventure that could set all of Central America on fire. On behalf of Latin America's dignity, we Nicaraguans must not let the Yankees humiliate our homeland. Hence our call for an alert and for national mobilization. This is because we have never been closer to both peace and the danger of direct intervention.

Police-Protected Sandinist 'Mobs' Seize Goods

PA171744 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 15 Mar 88 pp 1, 8

[Excerpts] At least 2,000 people were affected at dawn today as a result of actions carried out by Sandinist mobs that enjoyed police protection. The actions took place in the Oriental and Huembes marketplaces.

During the so-called "operations," the Sandinist mobs, which included groups of young men who looked like bums and some dirty-looking women who wore olive-green pants, relieved businessmen of everything they had at that moment. [passage omitted]

The so-called zonal office of the FSLN in Ciudad Jardin received everything seized from the businessmen. [passage omitted]

Arce Returns From USSR, East European Tour

PA181300 Managua Sistema Sandinista Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Commander of the Revolution Bayardo Arce Castano, deputy coordinator of the FSLN National Directorate's Executive Commission, yesterday returned from a tour of seven European countries. Arce described the visit as positive with regard to the strengthening of relations between the Sandinist people's revolution with the socialist community.

Arce visited seven countries, including Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, USSR, Poland, Yugoslavia, and the GDR. The tour served to update cooperation and assistance agreements.

[Begin Arce recording] Logically, this will permit our people to have some resources and additional aid for our defense and production efforts and to tackle our country's problems. Obviously, we made it clear that we Nicaraguans are making extraordinary efforts, because we are fundamentally responsible for resolving our problems. However, we were able to point out new forms of cooperation we require from friendly countries to fulfill these tasks.

We were also able to sign interparty [partidarios] agreements for this year with the USSR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland to revitalize and bolster relations and exchanges between the FSLN and each of the government parties of the countries I mentioned. [end recording]

Arce pointed out that he again found understanding and solidarity with Nicaragua's efforts in these friendly countries.

Panama

Intelligence Chief, 5 Other Officers Retired

PA181350 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0012 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City, 18 Mar (DPA)—The Panama Defense Forces (FDP) press office told DPA this afternoon that one colonel, three majors, one captain, and one lieutenant colonel had been retired by the top military command.

The list of the officers affected by the measure are:

Colonel Bernardo Barrera (chief of intelligence, G-2); Majors Juan Oberto, Pablo Pinto, and Jose Williams; Captain Orlando Iguez; and Lieutenant Colonel Eros Ramiro Cal, who had replaced Colonel Leonidas Macias as chief of the Panama Police Department. Macias had headed the failed coup attempt against General Noriega.

Officers Arrested

PA172137 Paris AFP in Spanish 2102 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City, 17 Mar (AFP)—According to a military source, Colonel Bernardo Barrera, chief of intelligence of the Panama Defense Forces, was dismissed and "retired" from his post today, 24 hours after an unsuccessful coup attempt against General Manuel Antonio Noriega.

The source added that Majors Cristobal Fundora and Luis Carlos Samudio as well as three captains have been arrested during the last few hours to investigate whether they participated in Wednesday's coup attempt.

Majors, Captains 'Recovering Positions'

PA180443 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 0428 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Panama Defense Forces [FDP] majors and captains seem to be recovering positions. The most recent reports we have and that were supplied by some Colombian stations is that majors and captains have been able to control certain military regions, even a region as important as Chiriqui, and, I repeat, very important incidents are expected tomorrow in Panama. [passage omitted]

Now it is directly up to the captains and majors of the FDP to determine what the situation will be tomorrow.

Government Denies Plans for State of Siege

PA180056 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2258 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Panama City, 17 Mar (DPA)—General tension increased in Panama City today following the government's decision to militarize public services. Protests continued throughout the nation, although to a lesser degree because of the strict police control.

Payment of biweekly wages, due last Monday to the 120,000 employees of ministries and autonomous institutions, continued today, although only partially, since the state does not have the $36 million required to make the payments. Colonel Leonidas Macias, head of the Panama City Police Force and a member of the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] general staff, who led the coup attempt against FDP Commander General Manuel Antonio Noriega yesterday, remained incommunicado today.

Macias will be tried for treason, along with the other participants in the uprising: Majors Jaime Benitez and Aristides Valdomero; Captain Humberto Macea; and 22 junior officers.

A member of the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) has reported that the Legislative Assembly may meet on Monday. For its part, the government emphatically denied rumors that civil rights will be suspended and a state of siege decreed.

Today, the police presence since the early morning prevented new outbreaks of violence, but various groups could be seen protesting against the government of President Manuel Solis and Gen Noriega. [passage omitted]

Interurban transportation services returned to normal today, while around FDP headquarters—the scene of yesterday's military events—there was strict vigilance, and only half of the city's normal activities were being carried out, with policemen posted strategically throughout the metropolitan area. It was reported that Gen Noriega met this afternoon with the General Staff to make a general assessment of the situation. A cabinet meeting has been scheduled for tomorrow to examine the country's general situation. [passage omitted]

Three FDP military units have been posted near the U.S. bases in the canal area, where exercises for defense of the canal are underway.

2 Women Die During Panama City Looting

PA181355 Panama City Radio Verbo in Spanish 2200 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Two old women were killed in the vicinity of the market as a result of pushing and shoving by hoodlums who sacked stores in Calidonia. Both women arrived dead at the emergency section of the Santo Tomas Hospital. Their names are Vivian Austin, 89, residing in Calidonia, Carnaval Building; and Apolonia Mendoza, 67, also residing in Calidonia.

According to relatives, the women were shopping when the Tivoli store was set on fire. Looters who entered the store ran the women down as they were escaping with their loot. Unfortunately, the two women were in the path of the looters and they may have died from fright.

U.S. Soldiers With Weapons, Maps Arrested

PA180400 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0336 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpts] U.S. soldiers, moving around suspiciously on Federico Boyd Avenue near Panama University, were arrested around 1500 by the General Staff's G-2 units. [passage omitted]

When they were arrested they were carrying small weapons, military supplies, official U.S. Government documents, and maps of Panama City. This is an activity that goes against the security of the Panamanian state.

The arrest of these U.S. soldiers in an area where there are daily activities to disrupt public order, alter social peace, and vandalize shows once more the U.S. military intervention in Panama's domestic affairs, because, through the investigations carried out, it was proved that neither the binational organizations created by the canal treaties nor the Panamanian authorities had authorized them to carry out any type of activity in Panamanian territory.

Because of the seriousness of the incident, those arrested have been turned over to the pertinent local authorities.

IRHE Management Explains Power Outage

PA181528 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 18 Mar 88 pp 1-A, B-5

[Communique issued by the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification (IRHE) on 17 March—passages in uppercase as published]

[Text] OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE

In view of the nationwide power outage that occurred yesterday at 1230, IRHE's general management believes it has the unavoidable duty of reporting the following to the community and consumers.

1. The power outage occurred because of criminal sabotage carried out by [IRHE] officials under instructions from the directors of IRHE's labor union [Union of Workers of the IRHE], thus leaving the country without electricity for more than 15 hours and causing all sorts of damage, ranging from the loss of large quantities of food stored by thousands of Panamanians to the suffering of the sick undergoing surgery or in intensive care units.

2. IRHE's directors immediately took every effort to reestablish the system. The IDAAN [National Water and Sanitation Institute] [pumping] station in Chilibre was reactivated first so the shortage of potable water will not become another serious situation.

3. Today, special crews are checking the national system—including generating plants as well as power transmission lines—to return operations to normal as soon as possible.

4. In an irresponsible act, IRHE workers stoned, fired at, and almost destroyed the vehicle of Metropolitan Area Manager FELIX NAVARRO, which is an action this enterprise strongly condemns.

5. The task of reactivating the system has been accomplished in a difficult atmosphere because, in many cases, in a criminal attitude, the workers themselves established special mechanisms that take whole circuits out of service when one tries to reconnect them to the transmission grid.

6. IRHE's management assures the country that it is taking harsh disciplinary measures and that the sanctions it will impose on those responsible for this deliberate sabotage will not be less than that which the law allows. A whole team of IRHE attorneys is already working on lawsuits.

7. Finally, IRHE wishes to apologize to the community for any inconveniences caused because of a reckless, irresponsible, and unprecedented action in the long history of work and dedication of this state public service enterprise, and assures that an entire team of qualified technicians and personnel is working [to resolve the problem].

Abadia Says Kneebone Not Duly Accredited

PA181455 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 18 Mar 88 p 3

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Panamanian Foreign Minister Jorge Abadia has stated that U.S. citizen Terrence Kneebone, who was told to leave the country, is not a member of the diplomatic mission, but an AID official, the offices of which were closed down in December 1987.

AID stopped cooperating with the Panamanian Government in September 1987, and this led the Panamanian Government to give AID 10 days to leave the country in December 1987. However, Kneebone moved to the U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Office without being duly accredited.

Ambassador to Dominican Republic Resigns

PA171607 Paris AFP in Spanish 1412 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Santo Domingo, 17 Mar (AFP)—Luis Carlos Zarak, Panamanian ambassador to the Dominican Republic, has presented his resignation. Zarak confirmed this information to the morning newspaper EL SOL in Santo Domingo, but he did not specify the date or reasons.

Zarak, who reported that he will live in the Dominican Republic for some time, refused to discuss the grave internal and external crisis that prevails in his country, "because I am no longer an ambassador of my country here." [passage omitted]

Argentina

Caputo Addresses UN Security Council

PY172057 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Speech by Foreign Minister Dante Caputo at the UN General Assembly in New York; broadcast in progress—live]

[Text] ... the situation created in the South Atlantic as a result of the British Government's decision to carry out military exercises in the Malvinas Islands during March, in accordance with the public announcement made by that government on 11 February 1988.

We requested this meeting to express our serious concern, a concern that we know is shared by the countries of our region and by those countries which, respectful of the UN Charter in principle and purpose, especially Article 1, gave their massive support to the successive UN General Assembly resolutions calling for diplomatic dialogue and a negotiated solution to the dispute over the Malvinas.

Mr President, since the reestablishment of democracy in my country in 1983, Argentina has shown all possible indications of its firm willigness to search for a negotiated solution to the dispute with the United Kingdom over the Malvinas Islands. Therefore, all our initiatives, acts, and conduct have been peaceful. Our public declarations in the various multilateral forums, formal proposals to the United Kingdom, and above all our actions within the UN framework are the undeniable proof, the evidence of our conviction. Only diplomatic action should resolve conflict between nations. This is a simple and highly significant statement because war and peace in the world depends on whether or not countries respect that statement.

This is why, Mr President, the UN Charter begins from that point, it begins by demanding the negotiated solution of all disputes. This is why we have come to this council, because this is the organization that has the main responsibility of maintaining peace and security. We feel that, once again, the United Kingdom of Great Britain has ignored the real basis of the rational solution to conflicts between states.

During these years, the British Government has voted against resolutions that called for negotiations on all the aspects of its dispute with Argentina without any bias. Such is the case of UN General Assembly Resolutions 37/9, 38/12, 39/6, 40/21, 41/40, and 42/19. At the same time the British Government was voting against these resolutions, it was building the so-called Malvinas fortress and inaugurating a strategic airport in the island. Now, attempting to strengthen this position, it decides to display an exhibition of force in the South Atlantic.

This is how, Mr President, the evidence is completed. Not only is the British Government voting against the UN resolutions, it is also giving a show of force. Therefore, the Council will be able to appreciate the contrast between this conduct and the one shown by our country.

Mr President, as I said the United Kingdom announced that it would conduct military exercises in the zone of the Malvinas Islands in March in accordance with the public announcement made by the British defense secretary in the House of Commons on 11 February. This action [words indistinct] large mobilization of soldiers and military equipment into the territory in dispute.

We will probably hear in a few minutes, when the British delegation speaks, an explanation that the purpose of the exercises is to confirm the rapid reinforcement capacity of the alleged defensive installations of the islands. Of course we have enough reasons to believe that that purpose does not reflect the United Kingdom's true intentions.

We could discuss several possibilities to help us understand the British intention. However, rather than analyze such possibilities we should concentrate on the evidence, not on conjectures. It is obvious and clear that the United Kingdom is taking this attitude even as indirect contacts aimed at creating mechanisms to prevent military incidents in the South Atlantic are taking place, or have just taken place. How, then, can we interpret the attitude of a country, which despite its arguments and apparent line of reasoning, decides on a military deployment while discussions are under way on how to prevent military deployment?

How can we understand the attitude of a country that, as I have said, votes against resolutions which call for negotiations, and which, in addition to going against the will of the majority of the members of the UN General Assembly, makes a display of force in reply to the UN petitions? Where is it doing this?

In the South Atlantic Ocean. The same area the UN General Assembly declared, by a Brazilian initiative and with British approval, a zone of peace and cooperation.

Therefore, we have come to discuss in this Security Council meeting not only the seriousness of these maneuvers, which generate tensions and uncertainties, but also the fact that they are evidence of an attitude dangerous to world peace.

If any doubted the British position, we have here as evidence this dangerous situation before all of us.

Today you will have to evaluate the attitude of a government which, despite having supported UN measures to reduce military activities and presence in the South Atlantic, is behaving in a manner totally opposite to

these measures. In addition to evaluating this attitude, the Argentine Government believes that it is even more important to evaluate the consequences of this attitude.

I mean, Mr President, that this is not only a matter of the British decision being a real source of insecurity for the Argentines or of trying to consolidate the colonial dominion in the Malvinas Islands through these actions—although these reasons alone, would be enough to summon this council. This is a matter of a British attitude that affects all of us, mainly the Latin American, but the rest of the world as well, because the United Kingdom is ignoring—I insist, and this is my reasoning—the idea of negotiation as a basis for solving conflicts.

In a couple of minutes we will perhaps hear the United Kingdom say that it has always been open to negotiations. Of course it means negotiations that explicitly ignore the subject that began and maintains this conflict; that is, the subject of sovereignty.

We will probably also hear that it would be more realistic to begin by what has been called measures to build mutual trust. I want to issue a warning regarding these two arguments:

First, how can one expect Argentina to accept the impossible as a negotiating condition? Second, how can the measures to build mutual trust be understood by a country which at the most unexplicable moment decides to carry out military maneuvers in the zone in dispute?

This is the main concern that brought us to this Council. These maneuvers are a categorical expression of a will not to negotiate, not to peacefully resolve the dispute with Argentina.

I have said that we have reasons to believe that this is not only an Argentine concern. The OAS has categorically expressed its concern through a resolution approved by nearly all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, requesting the suspension of these maneuvers.

Mechanisms of consultation and political understanding constituted by eight Latin American countries denounced the British attitude. Yesterday the Nonaligned Movement expressed the same concern.

Mr President, we are positively sure that the majority of the members of this council and of the United Nations agree with our astonishment and concern.

I insist on the fact that what is being questioned, what has moved Argentina, Latin America, and other countries to protest the British decision, is the imprudence and gratuitousness of this measure. This measure endangers the serious efforts to make the parties involved in a serious conflict like this one to sit and negotiate the peaceful solution to their conflict.

The attitude of the permanent members of the Security Council has a direct impact in increasing or reducing other countries' belief in the collective security system that has been consecrated in the UN Charter.

If a permanent member of the Security Council decides to place itself above the terms of this Charter, and to ignore its duty to always seek a peaceful solution for the disputes in which it is involved, we can expect very little from the other countries. The British decision to ignore the terms of the UN Charter will strengthen the position of those who are interested in believing that UN acts are ineffective and deserve no credibility.

The United Kingdom has no excuse for its current attitude regarding the South Atlantic, or for ignoring its duty to negotiate with Argentina a peaceful and definite solution to the sovereignty dispute over the Malvinas Islands.

This duty is objectively and clearly shown in the charter, and goes beyond the reasoning whether or not the positions of the two involved governments can be easily made compatible.

Mr President, allow me to discuss the topic which I mentioned a few minutes ago. Mutual distrust is unquestionably a great obstacle for the implementation of a mechanism to solve the difficulties existing between Argentina and the United Kingdom.

This is a real and serious problem that has existed for a long time. Both the Argentine and British Governments have the inescapable obligation to avoid any measure that may contribute to increase this distrust. The good faith of our two governments is indispensable to put an end, not only to our difficulties over the Malvinas Islands, but also to other problems which result from this dispute or which are connected to other concrete aspects of our relations.

Within this context, no excuse can justify this attitude, not even the British argument that my country has not yet declared a formal cessation of hostilities. The Argentine Government has repeatedly declared itself ready to comply with this formality, which we believe unnecessary, as soon as the bilateral dialogue is truly renewed.

It may be recalled here that the United Kingdom has never declared a formal cessation of hostilities in its 1956 war with Egypt.

Summarizing, Mr President, the decision we will analyze today has more dramatic tones. There are certain questions which we, Argentines, were not able to answer, and which I believe the members of this Council will not be able to answer either.

If things are really how the United Kingdom believes they are and we can [word indistinct] coldly the solution of this dispute, will the answer to this problem be to start

negotiations which demand that Argentina give up its historical claim? What is the political feasibility of such a proposal? Is there any intention of confusing the actions of a dictatorship with those of a democratic government? I ask you frankly: How long does the United Kingdom expect a policy such as that to last? If the United Kingdom has so repeatedly admitted the existence of this dispute, why does it refuse to begin negotiations? Why is it afraid of negotiating? Maybe because the United Kingdom insists in maintaining its position regarding negotiation?

If this were the reason, why wasn't the United Kingdom afraid to start negotiations with Argentina over the Malvinas Islands in the past?

It is proper to recall, Mr President, that in 1977 the United Kingdom signed a joint communique with the Argentine de facto regime which stated: quote The Government of the Argentine Republic and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and North Ireland have agreed to begin negotiations beginning June or July 1977. The negotiations will refer to future political relations, including sovereignty, over the Malvinas Islands, the South Georgia Islands, and the South Sandwich Islands unquote.

In view of all that, Mr President, I must ask an inexorable question: If the British Government could sign such a communique with a dictatorship, why does it refuse to negotiate with President Alfonsin's democratic government?

Thank you very much, Mr President.

Rico Repudiates Violence in Communique

PY180058 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 2340 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 17 Mar (DYN)—Former Lieutenant Colonel Aldo Rico today repudiated the "escalating acts of violence occurring daily," such as robberies, holdups, and bombings, and flatly denied his alleged involvement in these acts.

In a brief communique released to the press today—but dated (?4) March—Rico responded to reports made by "the news media governed by the state," reports that "suspiciously make us appear" as the perpetrators of those crimes.

The communique states: "Concerning the escalating acts of violence occurring daily, such as bombings, robberies, and holdups, groundless reports on escaped prisoners, etc., I am expressing my complete repudiation of these acts as they are completely at odds and opposed to the essence of Operacion Dignidad."

According to Rico, this "operation" still continues "in force," and involves "the moral rehabilitation of the Argentine Army, which we have openly and directly championed in Easter Week and Monte Caseros."

Tucuman Government House Bombed; No Injuries

PY171645 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 1504 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] San Miguel de Tucuman, 17 Mar (DYN)—Some 20 policemen who were traveling in an armored vehicle have thrown noise bombs against the Government House main gate, in a commando type operation in support of their salary demands.

The blasts caused great alarm. The policemen arrived in the armored vehicle, hastily got out, and went up the stairs that lead to the main gate, where they threw the bombs that went off causing panic among the people in the area.

As soon as the bombs went off the policemen left in the armored vehicle. This occurred shortly before noon.

Bolivia

Government Promises To Eradicate Coca

PY171347 La Paz La Red Panamericana in Spanish 1130 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Guillermo Justiniano, agriculture and campesino affairs minister, has said the Bolivian Government will fulfill its commitment to the U.S. Government to eradicate 1,800 hectares of coca by August 1988.

He said that so far, 1,200 hectares of coca has been eradicated in the tropical regions of Yungas and Chapare. He added that the eradication of 1,200 hectares of coca offers assurance of the fulfillment of the goal to eradicate 1,800 hectares by August, which was promised to the U.S. Government in exchange for U.S. financing of coca replacement.

Justiniano also pointed out that the opinion of some U.S. congressmen that Bolivia did not fulfill its commitments does not reflect the overall U.S. opinion on this issue.

Justiniano said that today he is going to Chapare to inaugurate the coordinating committee between producers and the government.

U.S. Support Rapped

PY171401 La Paz La Red Panamericana in Spanish 1130 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Foreign MInister Guillermo Bedregal has said that the U.S. Government is not fulfilling its commitment to support the countries interested in fighting drug trafficking because the U.S. Government has problems in its own administrative structure.

Bedregal said that, so far, Bolivia has fulfilled the hopes of the international community regarding the struggle against drug trafficking, despite current economic limitations. He called on the U.S. Government to carry out more adequate actions in accordance with the requirements of the struggle against economic power and an organized mafia.

Bedregal added that the U.S. Government is not doing its part. He said U.S. drug consumption is very large and that this situation should make U.S. officials stop and think.

Bedregal also sent notes to the Colombian, Ecuadoran, Peruvian, and Venezuelan ambassadors in La Paz proposing more coordinated action among the countries of the Andean Pact in the struggle against drug trafficking. Bedregal explained the results of the latest meeting in Vienna, and he called for a meeting of officials of the subregional group to discuss this issue.

Economy Aided by Argentine Gas Payment

PY170317 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0110 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] La Paz, 16 Mar (EFE)—The Bolivian Government today said the national economic situation in the next 3 months will be better and the most urgent problems will be solved thanks to the fact that, in the last few days, Argentina has paid $10 million for Bolivian gas.

Upon leaving the Government Palace today, Foreign Minister Guillermo Bedregal said next week Argentina will pay another $12 million for the gas.

One of Bolivia's main sources of income is the sale of its gas to Argentina. Therefore, "any" delay in the payments creates great economic problems for the country, Bedregal said.

Bedregal pointed out that, despite its domestic economic problems, Argentina regularly pays for Bolivian gas.

Brazil

Sarney on Democratic Transition 'Apprehension'

PY170315 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2255 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Aboard a Brazilian Navy ship in Rio de Janeiro, President Jose Sarney today stated that the current democratic transition is experiencing moments of apprehension. President Sarney today visited the training ship "Brazil," which later left on a training mission.

This morning President Sarney landed at the Galeao Air Base, where he was welcomed by Governor Moreira Franco and military commanders. Then they visited the Mocague naval base.

President Sarney and his delegation reached the training ship aboard the "Gaviota." This is the second time the president has visited the ship, launched in September 1983. It was built for the professional and technical training of Navy cadets. Sarney came to bid farewell to the crew, which is beginning a training mission that will take them to several countries. The presidential delegation was honored with a luncheon. [passage omitted]

Country Pays $118 Million in Interest

PY180133 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Brazil today paid $118 million more in interest to the creditor banks, Central Bank Director Antonio Seixas said today in New York.

The payment was made with part of the Central Bank reserves, in compliance with the Brazilian decision to pay the foreign debt interest which became due in January and February.

Antonio Seixas said that Brazil intends to pay more interest as the negotiations with the creditor banks continue. Seixas also said the rescheduling of the Brazilian debt for a 20-year term, with an 8-year grace period, is still being discussed.

Foreign Minister Meets Chile's Gabriel Valdes

PY180122 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Today former Chilean Foreign Minister Gabriel Valdes was received at Itamaraty by Foreign Minister Abreu Sodre.

Valdes is one of the most important leaders of the Chilean Christian Democratic Party, which opposes General Augusto Pinochet's regime.

Valdes came to Brazil to deliver a series of lectures on Latin America. He held an informal meeting with Abreu Sodre at Itamaraty, where they mainly discussed problems related to Latin America.

Foreign Minister Abreu Sodre said:

[Begin recording] We analyzed Latin American problems with Itamaraty Secretary General Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima. We noted what Valdes said about Chile, and then we briefed him on Brazilian problems. We pointed out the importance of the decisions to be made this week, when the Constituent Asembly will vote for the parliamentary or presidential system of government. [end recording]

Cooperation With Soviet Space Projects Planned

PY170301 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 16 Mar 88 p A19

[Text] A three-man Soviet scientific mission has been in Brazil since Monday visiting the Space Research Institute (INPE) of Sao Jose dos Campos, 85 km northeast of Sao Paulo. The Soviets are here to discuss the possibility of Brazilian participation in a Soviet space mission to Mars in 1992. Brazil would be allowed to put equipment inside the spacecraft.

The Soviet mission's objective is to establish two large scientific cooperation projects: one for the study of magnetic anomalies in the South Atlantic; and the other to investigate the equatorial jet stream. This information was provided by Beatriz Dornelles, 28, an INPE press official.

She explained that the magnetic anomalies the Soviets are interested in only exist in Brazil, between the cities of Sao Jose dos Campos in Sao Paulo State and Santa Maria in Rio Grande do Sul State, with their epicenter at the city of Blumenau, Santa Catarina State. Because of the reduced magnetic field of the earth in this area, the region is more exposed to solar radiation. The scientists believe these anomalies affects both humans and vegetables. However, Dornelles noted, that "this has not yet been proved."

The first project will require installing magnetic field measuring instruments in Brazil, as well as launching stratospheric balloons carrying observation instruments and equipping an aircraft with research instruments. The Soviets also intend to launch research rockets from a ship anchored off the Brazilian coast and to set up on land a station to receive signals from the satellite Cosmos-1809, which was placed into orbit by the Soviet Union in 1986.

The second project will study the equatorial electrical jet stream, which is an electric stream that circles the earth equator at the altitude of 110 km.

Soviet Steel Mill Project Mission Arrives

PY180258 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] A Soviet mission which will guarantee its country's participation in a steel mill project in the state of Maranhao arrived in Sao Luis today. The Russians first visited Brasilia in order to contact officials from the Foreign Ministry, CONSIDER [National Council for Nonferrous Metals and Steel, Inc.], and SIDERBRAS [Brazilian Iron and Steel, Inc.].

In Maranhao, the Soviet mission attended a conference by Francisco Batista Ferreira, executive secretary of the Great Karajas program. The foreign delegation also visited the Ponta da Madeira zone, the port of Itaqui, and the 30-square km area where the future steel mill will be built.

Briefs

Record Monthly Trade Figures

Foreign Trade Department President Namir Salek has reported the best trade balance figures ever recorded for the month of February. They show a surplus of $858 million. Exports amounted to $2.058 billion and imports to $1.2 billion. The trade balance in January was also a record for that month at $1.032 billion. January exports amounted to $2.148 billion, and imports to $1.011 billion. [all figures as heard] [Summary] [*PY171505 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 16 Mar 88*]

Chile

Pinochet on Referendum, Other Issues

PM181008 Madrid DIARIO 16 (EL PAIS SEMANAL supplement) in Spanish 6 Mar 88 pp 12-14

[Interview with President General Augusto Pinochet by Alexis Duclos; date, place not given]

[Text] [Duclos] This year, 1988, will be a crucial one for Chile. According to the Constitution the aim of the referendum is for the people to decide on their government's policy. Does this mean your administration is involved in a democratization process?

[Pinochet] The 1973 revolution was an attempt to return to democracy—real democracy. This is why the aim of the referendum now is to lead us to democracy. The period ahead will be very different. There will be a parliament and all the democratic institutions laid down by the Constitution that will come into effect. The transitional articles currently in force, which have prompted much criticism, will be abolished.

[Duclos] What is the substance of the referendum?

[Pinochet] It will answer the question: "Do you or do you not wish to cooperate in the institutionalization of democracy?" The candidate proposed by the Armed Forces commanders in chief is identified with this idea.

[Duclos] Does this mean that it will be a "yes" or "no" to Pinochet?

[Pinochet] Who said I will be my own candidate...?

[Duclos] What will happen if the "noes" win in the referendum?

[Pinochet] There is another year to go before the elections, so the process will continue normally, as envisaged by the Constitution.

[Duclos] Is communism still a real threat to Chile?

[Pinochet] Communism is a threat to Chile. It is to all free peoples. Some say communism has developed in Chile under my Presidency. That is untrue: Communism has opted for the armed struggle and the use of violence rather than for the people's support. Communism conducts very clever agitation at certain times. Many of those currently on the political scene were hidden in 1973; now they are planning to come into action. It must not be forgotten that at that time there was already a high percentage of communists—17 percent, not counting those who did not vote. So the criticism made of the government that it has failed in its struggle against communism is unfounded. It is the communists themselves who now want to enter political life.

[Duclos] What are your feelings about the establishment of democracy in Argentina?

[Pinochet] I do not express opinions about neighboring countries' internal situations. I greatly respect the Argentines and believe only they know whether or not this system is appropriate for them. It is not my concern.

[Duclos] Chile is achieving good economic results, in comparison to its neighbors. Are you satisfied in this regard?

[Pinochet] Look, one must proceed from a concept of freedom. We do proceed from it and implement and promote a socioeconomic system that has yielded very good results. We have moved from a situation in which our single export was copper to a varied exports policy that has enabled us to gain several foreign markets. Overall a general increase can be observed in all areas of production. Attention must also be drawn to the vast social development, which has succeeded in reducing poverty. Innumerable statistics attest to our recovery. If you want to cite some, mention the 4-5 percent increase in our GDP for 4 consecutive years or our inflation rate of 20 percent a year. These are obvious and universally acknowledged achievements.

[Duclos] What is you major failure in government?

[Pinochet] Not to have achieved the results I hoped for in the employment field. I would have liked to reduce unemployment to 2 percent. The level is at present low—lower than in many developed countries—but it is not enough for me.

[Duclos] Amnesty International describes Chile as a country where human rights are violated. How do you answer this claim?

[Pinochet] It shows they are not acquainted with our situation. For various reasons they allow themselves to be influenced by erroneous and distorted information that conceals the real situation in Chile. Moreover, I wonder what they mean by "human rights." How objective are they? Why do they not concern themselves with what is happening in the Soviet Union or with other peoples oppressed by communism?

[Duclos] What is your opinion of the U.S. foreign policy in Chile and South America?

[Pinochet] I will repeat Professor Joxe's ideas. He says the United States wants to dominate South America. So it wants not tranquillity but poverty there. Bear in mind that it is not I, but an American professor, who says so.

[Duclos] France is about to hold a presidential election. Who is your favorite right-wing candidate: Raymond Barre, of the UDF [Union for French Democracy]; Jacques Chirac, the present prime minister; or Jean-Marie Le Pen, of the National Front?

[Pinochet] I repeat that I do not involve myself in the internal affairs of other countries, whether neighboring or more distant. Personally, however, I am better acquainted with Barre; I have books that I find interesting. As president, however, I cannot support any of them.

[Duclos] Are you aware of the campaign of attacks that will be unleashed after the referendum?

[Pinochet] I am fully aware that there will be a fierce campaign—against the government, against me, and against the Army, which they will try to split and distance from the institutional authorities.

[Duclos] How will you respond?

[Pinochet] How will I respond? (He shrugs.)

[Duclos] The church plays an important role in Chile. You met with the pope last year. What did you talk about, if it is not a secret?

[Pinochet] The meeting with his holiness was confidential. Since he has not said anything about it, I will not be the one to do so.

[Duclos] Do you have any problems with the church, with part of it, or with individual sectors?

[Pinochet] You are talking about the Catholic Church. In this country there is a separation between church and state and total religious freedom. However, some churchmen are committed to particular political currents and have become activists. The political groups that have infiltrated the church are diverting it from its mission, which is why disagreements with the authorities emerge. Be that as it may, I believe it would be desirable to define more precisely the implications of the separation of church and state—a point that is not very clear.

[Duclos] If you were to stand as a candidate and win the election, what would your priority task be?

[Pinochet] My aim has always been socioeconomic development, in terms of granting the people better living conditions—education, work, and health. That is the goal we will work toward.

[Duclos] Are you afraid following the attack?

[Pinochet] I have never felt fear—on the contrary. Obviously I am concerned for my young children, but my first response was to take adequate measures to avert further deaths. Indeed, an hour later I made a public address with the aim of calming the country.

[Duclos] Has your life changed since the attack, in terms of the way you think and live?

[Pinochet] Not at all; my life has not changed. I only regret the deaths of members of my staff.

Progovernment Party Experiencing 'Crisis'

PY172136 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0419 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Santiago, 16 mar (EFE) —The "National Renewal" [RN] Party, a Chilean rightist party supporting General Pinochet's regime, today experienced a crisis. The crisis followed a request to the national Executive Board to resign and postpone internal elections for councilmen, which are scheduled for tomorrow, Thursday.

RN Vice President Jaime Guzman, a government adviser, has asked the RN Executive Board, headed by Sergio Onofre Jarpa, a former interior minister under the current administration and former ambassador to Argentina, to resign.

In a news conference, Guzman said that it is necessary for the Executive Board to resign in order "to strengthen party unity and to prevent the party from deteriorating." Guzman also asked the party to postpone the elections for councilmen, by replacing them with agreements among the different political groups that form the party.

In Guzman's opinion, it is "indispensable to make an all-out effort for the victory of the yes vote in the presidential plebiscite" scheduled for the end of 1988.

Jaime Guzman is leading one of the RN factions that proposes to nominate Gen Augusto Pinochet as a single candidate for the plebiscite and to reelect him for another 8-year term (1989-97).

In turn, RN President Sergio Onofre Jarpa called a news conference to respond to Guzman and said that Guzman's comments are the result of a "certain transitory nervousness."

Jarpa said that he expects Guzman "to reconsider and work again for the party."

Disagreements Continue

PY180140 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1700 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Report by Raul Pena from the headquarters of the National Renewal Party]

[Text] Despite the apparent calm here at the headquarters of the RN Party, the RN has not yet overcome the disagreements provoked by the abrupt abandoning of the internal elections by the former UDI [Independent Democratic Union] faction of the party.

Jaime Guzman, RN vice president, practically abandoned the internal elections when he voiced his disagreement with the internal regulations governing the election of the members of 53 district boards that will in the future represent the party's approximately 100,000 members.

Both the factions that include the former National Work Front and the former National Union, on the one hand, and the former UDI, on the other, maintain that the party has split, but other members of those same factions stress that the discrepancies will be overcome and that calm will return to the RN.

The fact is that the details contained in Jaime Guzman's charges regarding irregularities in the internal elections have now been submitted to the party's Disciplinary Committee for evaluation.

Former Senator Francisco Bulnes, who arrived at noon at RN headquarters to vote, indicated that Jaime Guzman imposed an ultimatum that affects the internal democracy of the political parties when he demanded the resignation of the party's board of directors and a suspension of the party's internal elections.

Bulnes stated that Guzman is rebelling against the party and this has created a serious and delicate situation, but he hopes calm will prevail.

He requested that the matter be dropped to prevent more splits, and he hopes Guzman and his people will change their position.

Party Secretary Gonzalo Garcia has stated that the situation can be considered normal, because the problem affects only 6 districts within the capital, while 53 boards of directors have to be elected throughout the country.

Gonzalo Irribueren, a member of the party's Political Committee, has stressed that he cannot understand Guzman's attitude. He said the problem might even change the RN's rules and regulations.

Juan de Dios Carmona, also a member of the Political Committee, has reported that it has been agreed to submit the problem to the Disciplinary Committee and continue with the voting at the same time. He also expressed his support for Sergio Onofre Jarpa, the party's president.

The voting started this morning and will continue until 1900 here at 286 Suecia Street, where the meetings of the high-ranking members of the RN continue in order to try and overcome the crisis while the voting continues.

The UDI has already challenged the voting procedures in the capital.

A complete consensus has been reached in Iquique, so there will be no voting there. Voting is being carried out normally in all other districts.

Party President Denies Split

PY181122 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] This is a report from the National Renewal Party headquarters, at 286 Suecia Street.

RN President Sergio Onofre Jarpa has just said that there are no serious grounds for a party split unless this is the intention of those who are causing problems.

Jarpa said that if an agreement is to be reached, the differences between the two factions should be overcome.

He added that a few minor problems raised by RN Vice President Jaime Guzman have already been overcome, and that there is no reason to believe there will be a change in this situation.

A request was made to postpone the internal elections in order to address those problems, Jarpa said. Guzman's group should not have made a public scandal about this, he added.

If their goal is to demolish the party, they will not achieve it, Jarpa said.

Jarpa described as ridiculous the proposal by the Jaime Guzman faction. Jarpa said that the faction should observe the rules and regulations, and that the executive board is observing the law on political parties without overstepping the RN Court of Honor or Political Commission.

Jarpa said he has tried to seek consensus within the party in order to gain support for the yes vote and for the candidate to be proposed by the Armed Forces commanders in chief and by the Carabineros director.

Jarpa added that this is a commitment he has made, a commitment he will fulfill, that his faction is supported by two-thirds of the party's political commission, and that although with this leverage his faction could have removed leaders from the RN Political Commission, it will not do this.

Concerning the problem caused by Jaime Guzman, Jarpa said that the Court of Honor would review the reports he submitted, possibly next Monday.

Meanwhile, the internal elections continue at four balloting stations in the metropolitan area.

Zaldivar Denounces PCCh Role, Activities

PY171315 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Christian Democratic Party President Andres Zaldivar has predicted that with its attitude of favoring division and intruding in the activities of other opposition organizations, the outlawed PCCh will isolate itself. Zaldivar said that contrary to what the PCCh does, the parties should not intrude in the affairs of other organizations. Otherwise, political life will turn into life in hell, although some priests are active in the opposition.

[Begin Zaldivar recording] I believe that in politics one has to abide by neutrality toward other parties. This should be the case because if one starts expressing opinions on what other parties should do, one will be setting oneself up as a tutor for other parties. I personally will not accept this from any other party. So I believe that by expressing this opinion the PCCh is not acting appropriately. [end recording]

The Communists want to win at any cost and, therefore, they resort to any means to infiltrate the opposition parties that claim to be democratic. The Communists come like wolves in sheeps' clothing to register as independents, neosocialist, or neo-PPD [Party for Democracy]. They are always determined to proceed with their work of demolition or domination within those organizations in order to serve their own ends. The Communists were laughing when the United Left [IU] decided to expel the MAPU [United Popular Action Movement] for joining the PPD, which is like the UP [Popular Unity] of 1988. The Communists applauded the IU decision to expel the MAPU. Zaldivar said this predominance of the Communists is dangerous.

[Begin Zaldivar recording] The PCCh has always tried to be the pivot of the left in the IU. I believe the PCCh is trying not to lose this pivot position. I believe the PCCh will increasingly isolate itself. I have always said that the PCCh position will lead us to a self-imposed isolation. [end recording]

This is what will happen in time if the Communists decide to imitate the PPD, trying to take over the small forces of the opposition. Beware, people in the opposition. A hungry and rancorous wolf is marauding. This is the Muscovite wolf on the loose.

Government To Cooperate With UN Rights Group

PY180126 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Foreign Minister Ricardo Garcia has said that Chile will continue cooperating with the UN Human Rights Committee seated in Geneva. He said this at the Foreign Ministry building and added that the Chilean Government is always interested in the subject of human rights.

[Begin Garcia recording] The Chilean Government and Foreign Ministry's point of view has been clearly expressed. We are interested in the subject of human rights. We have clearly defended a [words indistinct] about this subject. We have openly cooperated with the Human Rights Committee, so this is our point of view. [end recording]

Regarding the petition of labor union leader Hugo Estivales regarding the need for the Chilean diplomatic missions to have a labor attache, Minister Garcia said that such a petition will have to be made to the Socioeconomic Council. Once this council views the subject, the Foreign Ministry will study the case, Garcia said.

'Direct' Drug-Terrorism Link 'Established'

PY181349 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Studies carried out by experts of the Chilean and Peruvian police forces have established a direct link between drug traffickers and terrorists.

This conclusion was reached by representatives of the Chilean and Peruvian Investigative Police.

Chile was represented at the meeting by General Fernando Paredes, while Peru was represented by Chief of Police Armando Reyes Roca.

In addition to other conclusions, it was stated that it has been clearly established that drug traffickers and terrorists are closely linked.

Another resolution reached during the meeting states that the Chilean and Peruvian police oppose the system whereby foreign agencies promote drug trafficking in order to justify their activities. [sentence as heard]

Free Elections Group Wants Earlier Plebiscite

PY171235 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Sergio Molina, who recently unenthusiastically marked the 1st anniversary of the Committee for Free Elections, has announced that he sent Interior Minister Sergio Fernandez a letter asking the government to advance the date for the plebiscite.

Molina and leaders of some of the 14 groups that joined to seek open elections, in contradiction to what is established by the national Constitution approved by the majority of the people, met in the Tupahue Hotel to celebrate their anniversary.

The Christian Democratic leader said the Committee for Free Elections is virtually in recess, and it might be reformed after the plebiscite.

Molina read a long declaration stating that the people in general are aware of the importance of the electoral institutions. He said his committee has opened 40 provincial offices and 180 district ones. He also said that by the end of the current month about 5 million people will have registered for elections in the electoral court.

The current circumstances have imposed a reality, he said, which is the plebiscite. Notwithstanding our principles, we believe the plebiscite could help initiate a process of democratic reconstruction, he stated.

Molina said his committee repudiates communism because communism disturbs public tranquillity, which is necessary for free elections. He explained what the upcoming plebiscite means:

[Begin Molina recording] The option between the yes or no vote was established in the 1980 Constitution. Both options are legitimate and must be presented to the voters with equal conditions. The plebiscite validates what we said a year ago: If we want a solid, permanent democracy for our country, regardless of who the future governors of Chile are, they must be supported by clear and clean procedures, making their legitimacy unquestionable. [end recording]

Molina said it is necessary to advance the date of the plebisicte in order to encourage more people to register for elections and to prevent any surprise.

Two South African Ships Visit Puerto Montt

PY171048 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Two ships from the South African Navy are paying an official visit to Puerto Montt as part of naval maneuvers.

One is the logistical support ship [name indistinct] and the other is the missile-carrying ship SAN "Frans Erasmus." South African Captain (Derek Bissel) reported that this is the first long voyage for the logistical support ship. He said the Chilean and South African Navies maintain close relations. The objective of this trip is mainly to exhibit South African transport facilities at the FIDA-88 [International Air Fair].

The South African captain explained that this is a good way in which to test the new logistical support ship. He said the two ships will carry out maneuvers with helicopters.

Another reason for coming to Chile, he said, is the good relations between the South African and Chilean Navies. This is the first time a South African ship has visited Chilean waters, he said. The 12,500-ton logistical support ship is the first ship of its kind completely designed and built in South Africa.

When asked about the importance of the FIDA for establishing international contacts, the captain said that the Chilean fair is one of the most important international air shows and that Chileans should feel proud of their show in Santiago.

APSI Magazine Vice Director Arrested, Released

PY180300 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The Military Prosecutor's Office of Santiago this afternoon issued a counterorder for the release of APSI magazine Vice Director Sergio Marras. The journalist was arrested this morning by personnel from the Investigative Police on orders from the Military Court regarding a case for alleged offenses against the Armed Forces.

That order was related to an editorial written by Marras and published in APSIS magazine in February 1987, regarding the Letelier case. According to information obtained, Marras will be summoned to make a statement regarding this case at a future date, but the arrest order has been suspended. The APSI vice director and director were held in custody for several weeks last year in relation to another case filed with the military court.

Foreign FPMR Regional 'Main Leader' Arrested

PY171351 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Another dangerous extremist, this time a foreigner, was arrested a few hours ago in Talca zone.

According to preliminary report, the foreign extremist has reportedly been identified as (Jaime Antolin Caro Moya).

This individual will be tried by the Talca military court for having seriously wounded Carabineros Corporal (Hector Salas Galat) when he was being arrested.

It was disclosed that the arrested extremist is one of the main leaders of the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front [FPMR] in the 7th region, and that he has participated in several attacks.

Paraguay

Election of Deputies Officially Approved

PY171524 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish 17 Mar 88 p 10

[Excerpt] The Chamber of Deputies yesterday officially approved the election of its members for the 1988-93 period by approving the electoral records of the elections held on 14 February. The Colorado Party will have 48 seats, the Radical Liberal Party 17, and the Liberal Party 7.

During a special session presided over by Dr Luis Martinez Miltos, the Chamber of Deputies yesterday turned down a Liberal Party request to invalidate the election in Capiata. The party claimed that there were "irregularities." Congress, the Senate, and now the Chamber of Deputies have all turned down the request on the grounds that is "inappropriate." [passage omitted]

'Harsh Language' of Party Editorials Debated

PY152319 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 15 Mar 88 p 7

[Text] Deputy Mario Abdo Benitez, Colorado Party Government Board second vice president, this morning said that "the radio program 'La Voz del Coloradismo' represents the opinion of the party Government Board. It, therefore, receives instructions from the Government Board and particularly from the party president. Mr Alejandro Caceres Almada, a member of the Colorado Party Government Board and a national deputy, is the director. He stays in close contact with the party president, and he receives strict instruction from him."

This subject surfaced publicly once again in the wake of statements made by Deputy Genaro Espinola Farina, who was acting general coordinator of the Press Subcommission of the National Republican Association [of the Colorado Party] during the recent election campaign. Espinola Farina has said that it was not necessary to use such harsh language in those radio programs. He thus criticized the program with the goal of giving them a new tone. Espinola Farina said: "It is not necessary to use such harsh language to defend the Colorado Party's positions. This can be done respectfuly and with decency."

Abdo Benitez explained that the content of the radio programs, which are aired over a network at 2330 every day, has not been analyzed by the Government Board Political Committee. He added that "perhaps at the Government Board plenum, a member can raise the problem Deputy Espinola Farina discussed. The problem has not yet been studied. The Political Committee is now addressing other problems which, in my opinion,

are more important. One of them refers to the upcoming party assemblies at the party chapters and auxiliary organizations where office terms have expired."

[ULTIMA HORA] What is your personal opinion about the "Voz del Coloradismo"?

[Benitez] I cannot give an opinion because the Political Committee has not yet studied the problem. It has not yet been studied, and, therefore, we have to wait and see. The "Voz del Coloradismo" follows the party's orientation.

Mario Abdo Benitez pointed out that Deputy Espinola Farina "is responsible for what he said. That is his personal opinion. Now, if the problem is raised at the Government Board plenum, that is something else. The problem will then be discussed there. We are a democratic party where broad freedom of opinion exists. So, if one of the members raises the issue of what vocabulary the 'Voz del Coloradismo' should use...it will be studied at the Government Board plenum. And in a democratic party, the decision of the majority should, of course, be accepted."

Operation Seeks To End Border Smuggling

PY170310 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 14 Mar 88 p 5

[Text] Foz do Iguacu, PR—Nearly 200 Paraguayan Army soldiers, under the command of Brigadier General Ricardo Bogado Silva, head of the 2d Infantry Division, assisted by Navy and police forces, are conducting spot-checks at various points of the Brazilian-Paraguayan border. The operation is aimed at breaking up gangs who specialize in smuggling weapons, particularly to Brazil.

Gen Bogado said in an interview that the operation, which began on 15 March, has no end date. The operation was a result of charges made during a television program entitled "Globo Reporter," during which it was reported that Paraguay was being used for smuggling Israeli-made weapons into Brazil.

Gen Bogado reported that several weapons have already been confiscated, including machineguns and pistols. He said the stores that sell weapons in the town of Presidente Stroessner are also being checked by authorities.

Gen Bogado also said Paraguay is getting ready to receive John Paul II in May, and that the operation is aimed at providing more security for the pope.

The operation has frightened Brazilian tourists because soldiers dressed in campaign uniforms are demanding documents from all who cross the border and carefully search all vehicles. Paraguayan officials, however, deny that the operation is in retaliation for the attitude of Brazilian truck drivers, who threatened to close Friendship Bridge [connecting Foz do Iguacu and Puerto Presidente Stroessner] on 7 March in a protest regarding auto and cargo thefts. After being stolen, the items are taken to Paraguay.

Saguier Said Collecting Evidence on Traffickers

PY172359 Asuncion LA TARDE in Spanish 17 Mar 88 p 8

[Text] Referring to the denunciation made by Miguel Abdon Saguier's wife that her house has been besieged by policemen, Hermes Rafael Saguier, member of the "Popular Mobilization for Change" movement of the Authentic Radical Liberal Party, has stated that "the control of Dr Miguel Abdon Saguier's house is an intimidation tactic to scare him from discussing the drug issue when he visits the United States."

Hermes Saguier said his brother, Miguel Abdon, leader of the movement, has taken documents referring to the protection and cover that several high-ranking officials provide to drug traffickers. He explained further that the information Miguel Abdon is taking has nothing to do with judicial evidence, but that it deals with intelligence evidence that proves the connections existing between high-ranking national authorities and drug traffickers.

Hermes Saguier added that in May 1988 we will probably have a Noriega-like case in the country.

"Both Taylor [U.S. ambassador to Paraguay] and the opposition have intelligence evidence regarding the protection of drug traffickers," he stressed.

CP Politburo Member Campos Interviewed

AU171028 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 12 Mar 88 p 2

[Report on interview with Hugo Campos, member of the Paraguayan Communist Party Politburo, by Attila Seres in Hungary; date, place not given: "Six Decades Underground"]

[Text] Hugo Campos, member of the Paraguayan Communist Party [PCP] Politburo, who visited Hungary on the occasion of a memorial ceremony held in Hungary in honor of the 60th anniversary of establishing the PCP, received NEPSZABADSAG correspondent Attila Seres and answered his questions.

[Seres] Presidential elections were held in Paraguay barely 1 month ago, and dictator Stroessner was elected president for the seventh time. Under what conditions were the recent elections held?

[Campos] The stage act called presidential elections has been recurring in 5-year cycles for 33 years. Now, for the first time in more than 3 decades, one could expect that something would happen, something that was not laid down in the scenario. According to preliminary news,

Stoessner did not intend to run again for the elections, but when his followers in the party started to get more and more used to the idea of possibly acquiring greater power, Stroessner practically made an assault to conquer the presidency of the ruling Colorado Party.

[Seres] Did General Stroessner consider withdrawing because of his health?

[Campos] No, opposition within the Colorado Party moved him to perform his stage act. Rumor had it that the United States expressed its disapproval of using dictatorial methods of administration, violating human rights, and participating in drug smuggling operations. It was common knowledge that Taylor, U.S. ambassador to Asuncion, maintained close relations with certain conservative groups within the opposition parties; many people concluded from this that the White House was preparing a change in Paraguay. It is now clear that Washington was keeping two irons in the fire, and in case the old general became "unable to fight," Washington kept the opposition as an option to fall back on. Washington finally sided with the old and time-honored politician. And this also suited Stroessner's interests, because he is the country's richest man; and being its most energetic entrepreneur, he only considers his property safe—property which, according to rumor, originates from smuggling drugs—when power is concentrated in his hands. And because the general himself also represents the interests of the Paraguayan oligarchy, bankers, and of that part of the population that is financially better off, his election could be no cause for concern. The recent elections, however, cannot be identified with the previous ones. The recent elections were the first occasion when nominating the general divided the ruling Colorado Party, and a hard anti-Stroessner faction emerged from the ranks of the so-called traditionalists.

[Seres] What is the situation of the opposition, which was intimidated and strongly divided in previous years?

[Campos] Under the changing conditions this opposition itself is also gaining strength and is calling for democratic changes with an increasingly strengthening voice. New left-wing political groups are emerging, groups like, for example, the Democratic Popular Movement and the Democratic Liberation Movement.

[Seres] We are currently commemorating the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the PCP. What is the situation of the PCP as it welcomes this remarkable date?

[Campos] Only twice in the recent 6 decades could our Communist Party operate legally: once, for 15 days in the thirties, and for 6 months in the forties. Discounting those periods, and speaking about the present, we are carrying out our work in totally illegal conditions. During this period our party has lost many of its followers and leaders, and our first secretary, Antonio Maidana, is at present imprisoned in a military jail in the Chaco region, where the climate is extremely severe. Our party lives, works, and endeavors to mobilize the masses and attain democracy, despite the continuous persecution.

The Fourth PCP Congress is expected to be convened in the near future; its task will be to work out the PCP's strategy for the post-Stroessner period.

Peru

Ambassador Not To Return to Panama

PA171505 Paris AFP in Spanish 2345 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Lima, 16 Mar (AFP)—Peruvian Ambassador to Panama Javier Ortiz de Zevallos today said in Lima that he will not resume his duties in Panama until the country begins a return to democracy.

The Peruvian Government summoned Ortiz de Zevallos to Lima at the beginning of March after the Panamanian Legislative Assembly dismissed President Eric Delvalle.

The ambassador said the Peruvian charge d'affaires will remain in charge of the Panama mission. He added that the military attache and the regular staff are also working.

Ortiz de Zevallos said that there are almost 4,000 Peruvians living in Panama, but only 1,000 are registered with the embassy.

Government To Auction Off 40 State Enterprises

PA171532 Paris AFP in Spanish 0102 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Lima, 16 Mar (AFP)—Jose Palomino, president of the National Corporation for Development (CONADE), said in Lima today that the Peruvian Government will sell at auction 40 public enterprises to local private businessmen.

Palomino stated that none of the strategic enterprises, whether they exploit natural resources or are public services, will be turned over to private hands and that the auction does not include foreign enterprises.

According to Palomino, the government will sell its share in nonstrategic enterprises in which the state is a minority shareholder. Palomino mentioned textile, cement, chemical, and mining enterprises.

Palomino estimated that the sale of the first few state enterprises will produce 2 billion intis ($27 million). We will release the basis and conditions of the sales and we will open the bids in public, Palomino added.

The government official recalled that the state has 135 enterprises, of which no more than 50 contribute with 15 percent to the GNP.

Uruguay

Minister on Debt Refinancing Agreement

PY161715 Montevideo EL DIA in Spanish 5 Mar 88 p 6

[Text] New York—Ricardo Zerbino, Uruguayan economy and finance minister, yesterday said after signing an agreement with the creditor banks that 60 percent of the payment of principal of the country's foreign debt will be paid after the year 2000.

Uruguay and its creditors signed an agreement to refinance $1.8 billion of its foreign debt, which represents a savings of $120 million in interest payments.

"This is a step forward for Uruguay and a relief in the amortization of capital up to 1991," said Zerbino before the ceremony for signing the agreement in the New York offices of Citicorp.

The financial package covers $1.779 billion of the Uruguayan foreign debt contracted with commercial banks with payments falling due between 1 January 1985 and 31 December 1991.

The condition of the agreement is an interest rate of 0.875 percent over LIBOR [London Interbank Offering Rate] with a due date of 2004. Uruguay was paying an interest rate of 1.4 percent.

"This is a reduction of the 'spread,'" said Zerbino, who added that practically 60 percent of the scheduled payment of the principal "falls in the next century."

The day the agreement goes into effect Uruguay will pay $24 million to the creditor banks, and it will also continue to respect the IMF policies.

Zerbino also indicated that the payments that fall due in 1990 and 1991 were also included in the package, which means that "practically 99 percent of the debt is being refinanced."

Zerbino concluded by saying that the agreement "paves the way" for the government elected in the 1989 elections because the first payments of the foreign debt have already been refinanced.

The agreement was signed by Zerbino and Central Bank President Ricardo Pascale, representing Uruguay, and by Citicorp Vice President William Rhodes, representing the banks.

The overall Uruguayan foreign debt is $5.4 billion.

Suriname

Church Group Tries Mediation With Rebel Leader

PM181059 Amsterdam DE VOLKSKRANT in Dutch 11 Mar 88 p 9

[Han Hansen report: "Surinamese Churches in Peace Talks With Jungle Commando"]

[Text] The Hague—The Committee of Christian Churches (CCK) in Suriname has made secret contact with rebel leader Brunswijk and with leaders of the maroon population to provide a stimulus for a peace settlement. The delegation of the CCK—the cooperation organization of the Catholic and Protestant churches in Suriname—undertook the journey to Brunswijk's headquarters with the knowledge of the old political parties in the Arron government. These want to find a solution which is acceptable to Bouterse's National Army.

Bishop Zichem, chairman of the CCK in Paramaribo, was unwilling to "confirm or deny" the delicate issue of the visit to Brunswijk. "However, our committee would like to make a contribution to ending the fratricidal war in Suriname," was his only comment.

In the region bordering on French Guiana the CCK delegation has also talked with "granmans," the legitimate leaders of the maroons without whose support Brunswijk cannot operate. These chiefs also have a great influence on decisions about the return of the 10,000 refugees in French Guiana and the environs of Paramaribo to their original domiciles in eastern Suriname.

Brunswijk has given the church representatives a letter for the Surinamese Government.

Resistance circles speak of "a very complicated and difficult operation," where the main question is whether Brunswijk is prepared to accept a compromise which would include his voluntary departure from Suriname; if necessary, without the agreement of his political representatives in the Netherlands, Jozefzoon and Chin A Sen.

The compromise must at any rate contain a provision that the remains of his Jungle Commando definitely end the fighting. This would satisfy the demand for a security guarantee that the refugees from eastern Suriname have made a condition for their return. It is said to have been suggested that the members of the Jungle Commando request refugee status in French Guiana.

A difficult problem for the Arron government is that the Army leadership has expressly indicated its unwillingness to negotiate with Brunswijk, even through Dutch mediation.

For Brunswijk it has grown increasingly difficult over the last few months to assert himself against Paramaribo. His political advisers in the Netherlands have continued to tell him that the democratization process in Suriname is due to his armed

pressure on the National Army. Brunswijk's ultimate goal is said to be for Bouterse and his cronies to be brought before the law. But statements to this effect have caused the military leadership in Parmaribo to adopt a low profile.

As well as the Netherlands, France is now prepared to pay part of the cost of repatriating the 8,000 Surinamese in the refugee camps in French Guiana. The offer has been made by French Prefect Dewatre. The United Nations is said to have been asked to guarantee the refugees' security in their original areas of domicile. At the present time refugee representatives are unwilling to comply with the French proposals.

Brunswijk has always viewed the refugees as a sort of "pawn" on the negotiating table. It is chiefly the French authorities that are maintaining great pressure on Paramaribo to relieve them of the costly and often troublesome refugees from eastern Suriname in the camps in French Guiana. In this way Bouterse would again be forced to reach a settlement with the Jungle Commando, because otherwise the maroons who have left the country will definitely not want to return, according to the Brunswijk speculations. The involvement of the High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Red Cross in the matter is threatening to undermine the chance that remains to rebel leader Brunswijk.